



ALL IN

13+
TEEN **1**

ABSOLUTE BATMAN



SCOTT
SNYDER
NICK
DRAGOTTA
FRANK
MARTIN

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WELCOME TO THE CHIROPTERA
HABITAT.

Bats are
CRAZY!

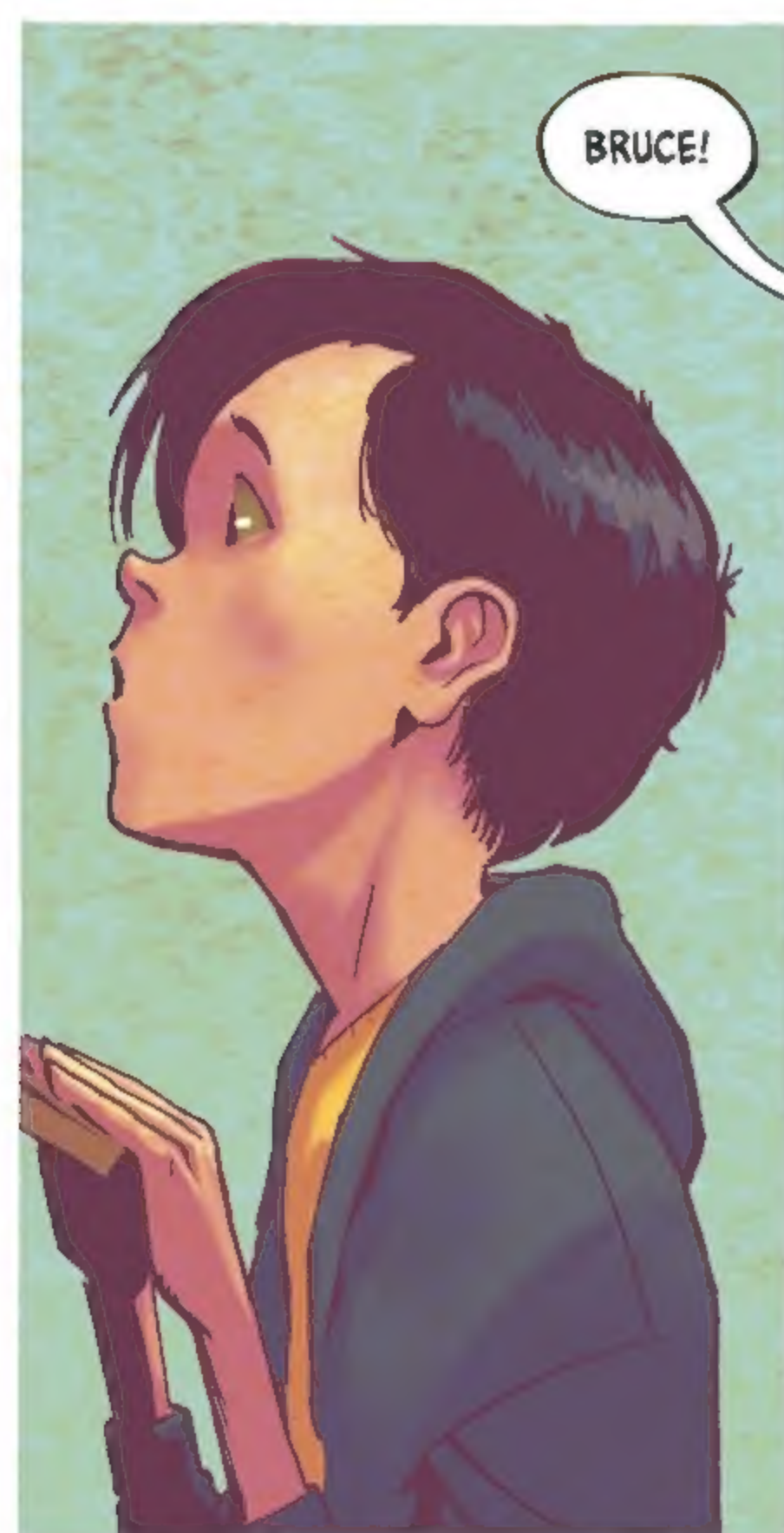
AS YOU ENTER THE ENCLOSURE
WE ASK YOU DON'T TAKE
PICTURES, BUT OBSERVE HOW...

Bats
FLY!

Bats
**WALK ON
THEIR**

Ba
**HAN
UPS!**

I'M
BATTY.





**ABSOLUTE
BATMAN**

"THE 200"

**PART ONE
OF FIVE**

Hello again, Gotham.

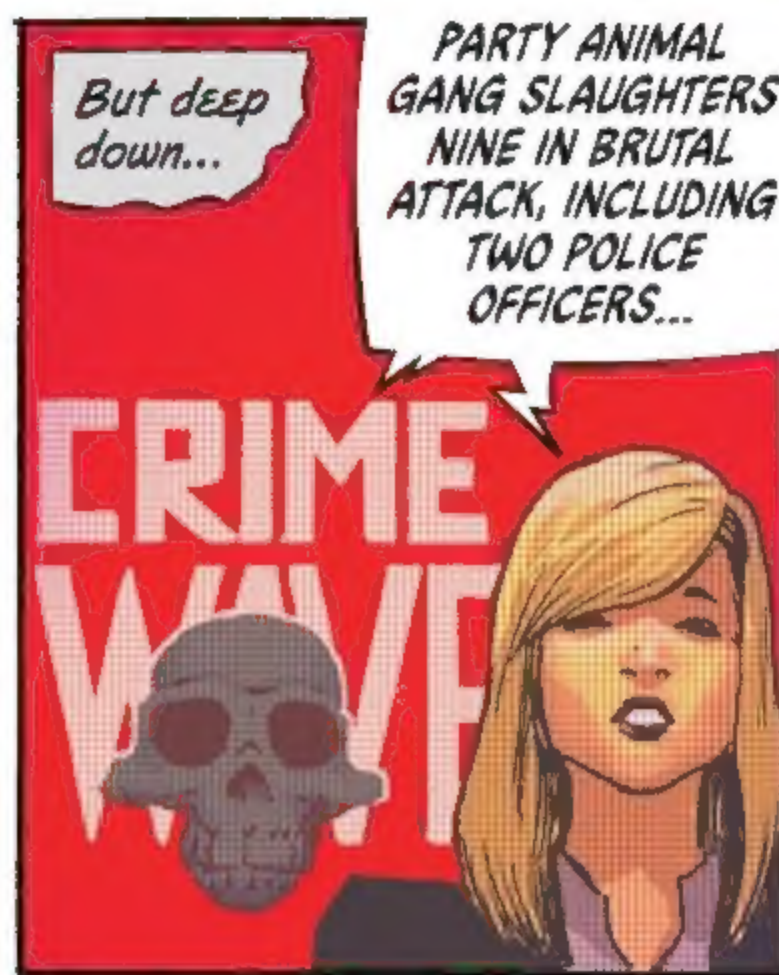


It's been a long time.



So, who are you these days? Who have you become while I was gone?

You're prettier, I'll give you that. Taller, brighter.



But deep down...

PARTY ANIMAL GANG SLAUGHTERS NINE IN BRUTAL ATTACK, INCLUDING TWO POLICE OFFICERS...



...something's changed.



My third lap around and I still can't find it.



Where's your heart?



You used to have a center. Hot and beating.



But something's hollowed you out.



In fact, I barely recognize you anymore.



I'm not sure I like this new you, Gotham.

But that's okay.



I don't think you're going to like me much, either.



My name is Alfred Pennyworth.

And I'm here to do some bad things.

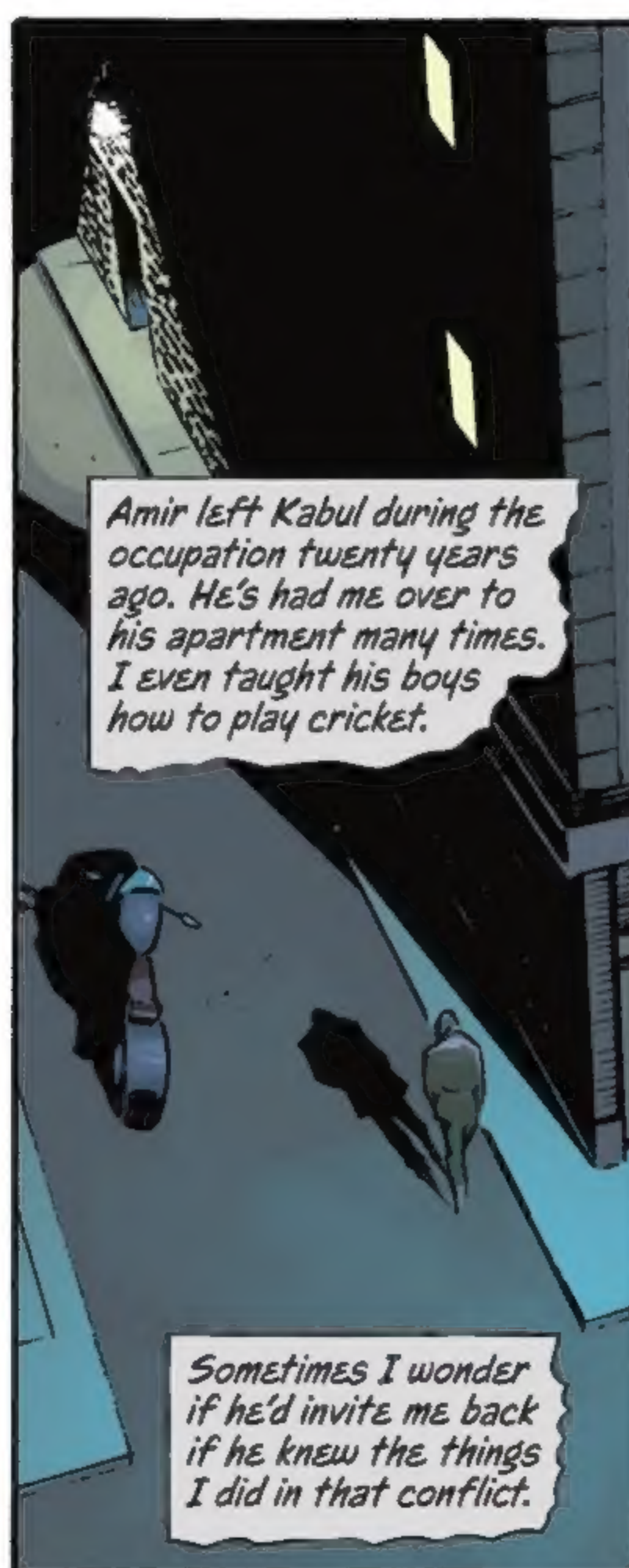


SO GOOD TO SEE YOU, OLD FRIEND. I STILL STOCK YOUR FAVORITE.

YOU'RE A GIANT AMONG MEN, AMIR.

NEVER.

TRUE, TRUE. BUT I WOULDN'T LEAVE YOUR BIKE OUT THERE UNLESS YOU'RE ASKING FOR TROUBLE...

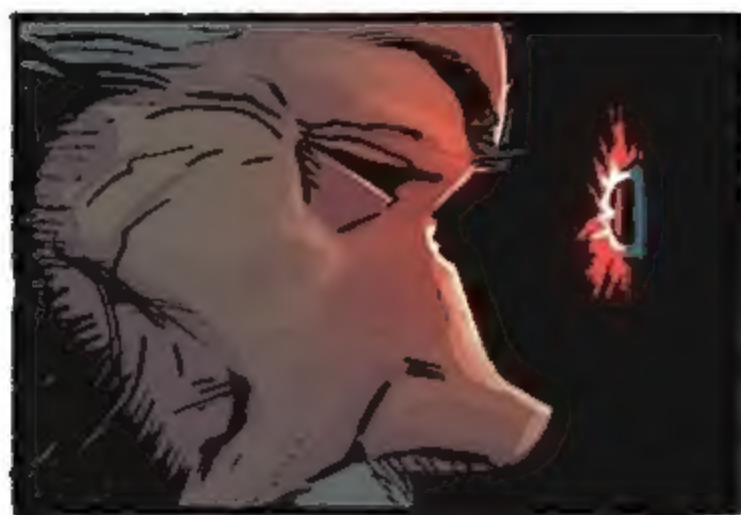


Amir left Kabul during the occupation twenty years ago. He's had me over to his apartment many times. I even taught his boys how to play cricket.

Sometimes I wonder if he'd invite me back if he knew the things I did in that conflict.



But...he runs the only decent tea shop in Gotham, which is why I keep my things next door.





PENNYWORTH
SIGNING IN.
CONNECTION
SECURE.

AH. TEA AS GOOD
AS YOU REMEMBER?

DELIGHTFUL.
WHAT'S THE
ASSIGNMENT?

I READ THE
DOCKET. BUT CAN
I ASK WHY YOU PULLED
ME OUT OF SINGAPORE?
I WAS *THIS CLOSE* TO
THE TARGET. I'D BEEN
CHASING HIM
FOR FIVE--

IN THE PAST
THREE MONTHS, A GANG
KNOWN AS "THE PARTY ANIMALS"
HAS BEEN SOWING CHAOS, BUTCHERING
CITIZENS AT RANDOM, RAISING THE
MURDER RATE BY 700 PERCENT ALMOST
SINGLE-HANDEDLY. A DAY CARE WAS
TORCHED YESTERDAY. THEY
DANCED OUTSIDE WHILE
32 BURNED.



YOU'RE NEEDED HERE. AND
QUITE FRANKLY, NO, YOU
MAY NOT. MANNERS...

YOUR
ASSIGNMENT IS STRICTLY
SURVEILLANCE. GATHER
INFORMATION ON THESE
"PARTY ANIMALS." BUT
DO NOT ENGAGE.

PARTY ANIMALS

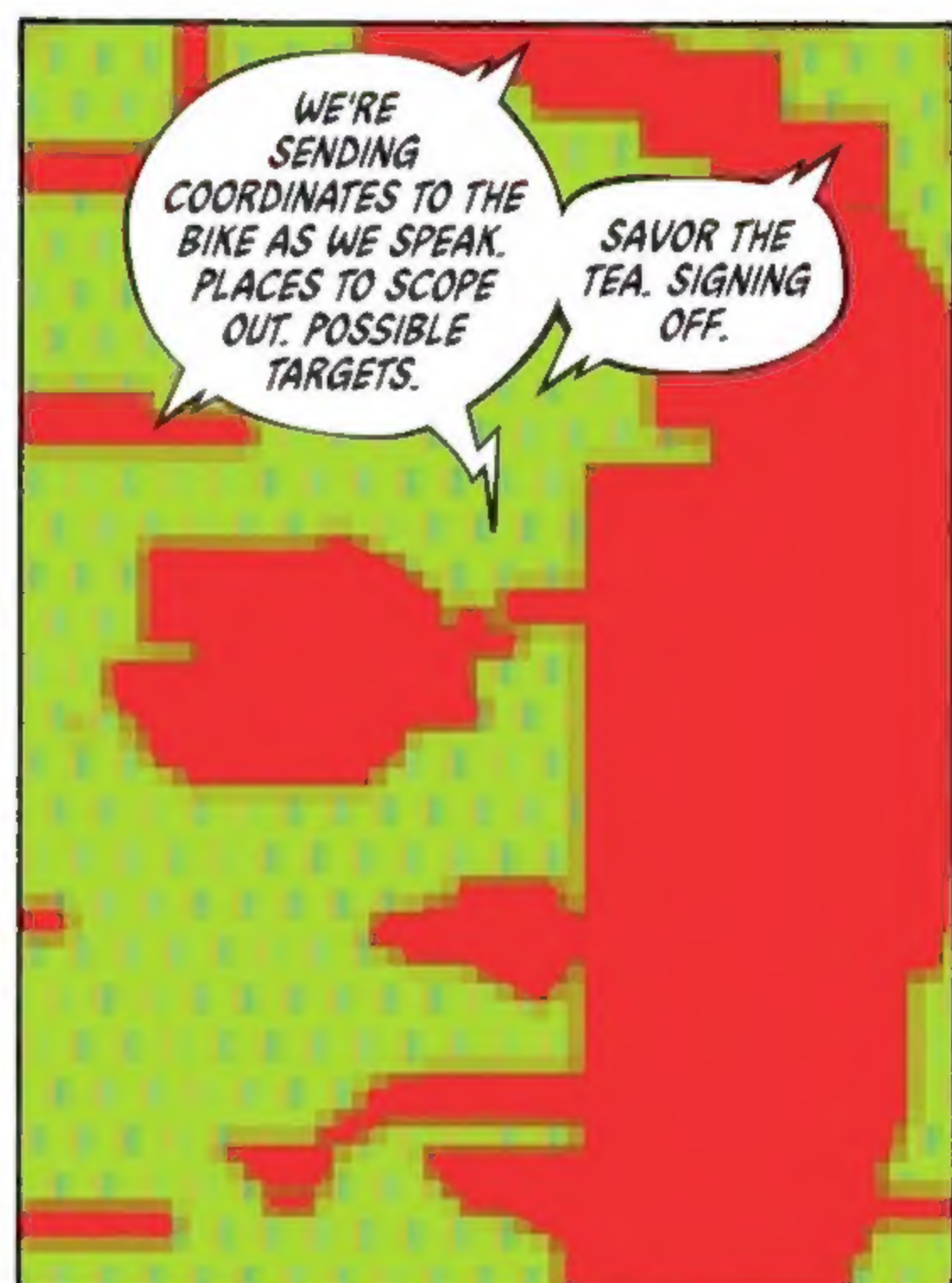


ONE NOTE--THERE MIGHT BE...
ANOTHER PLAYER IN TOWN.

WE'VE ONLY
CAUGHT GLIMPSES, BUT
HE SEEMS TO BE CIRCLING THE
GANG AS WELL. IF HE GETS
TOO CLOSE, YOU DO HAVE
AUTHORIZATION TO
ENGAGE HIM.



LOVELY.



WE'RE
SENDING
COORDINATES TO THE
BIKE AS WE SPEAK.
PLACES TO SCOPE
OUT. POSSIBLE
TARGETS.

SAVOR THE
TEA. SIGNING
OFF.



What's gotten into
you, old man?
Questioning
orders.

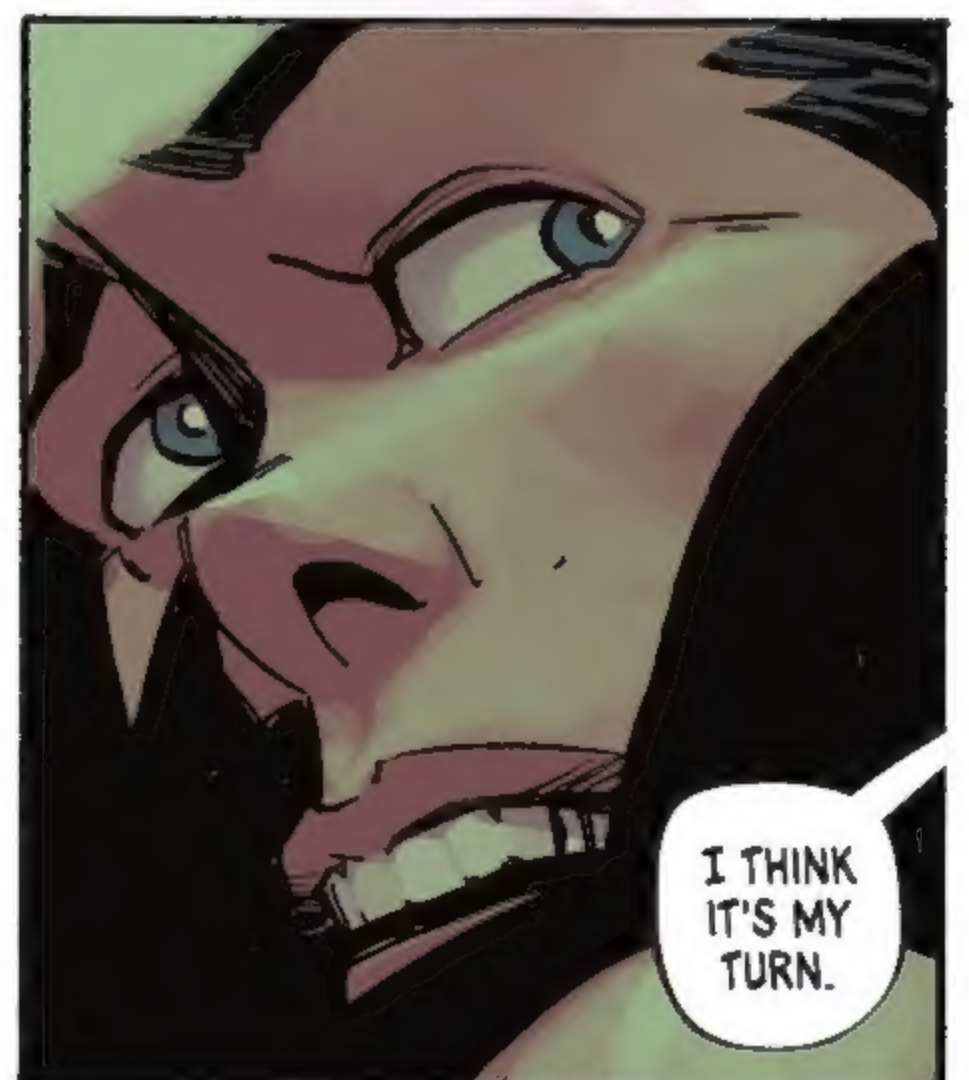


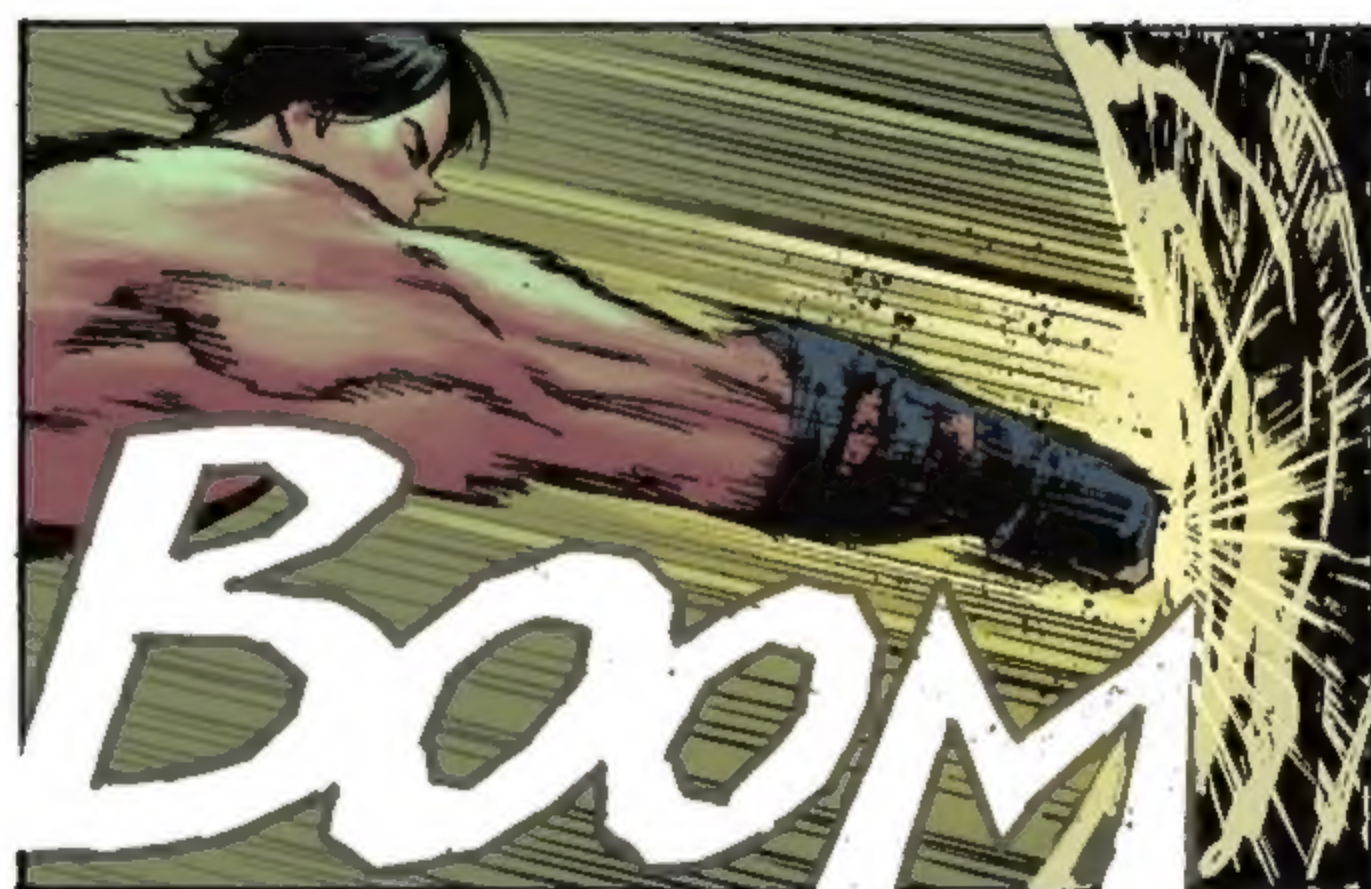
You're a
servant.

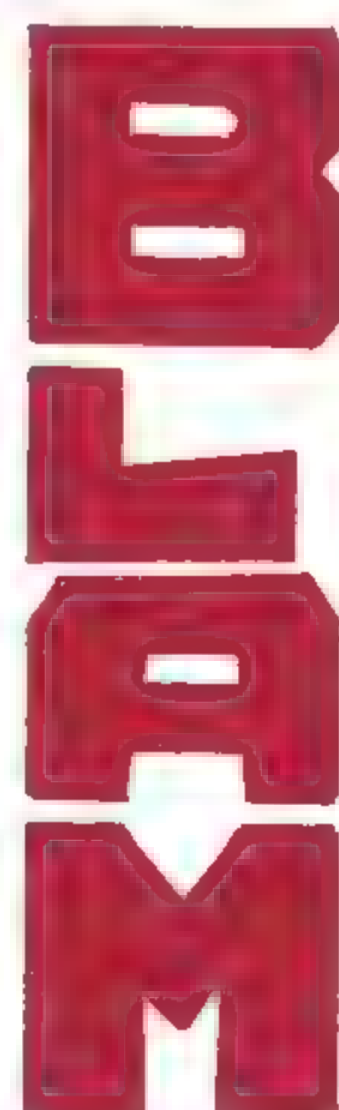
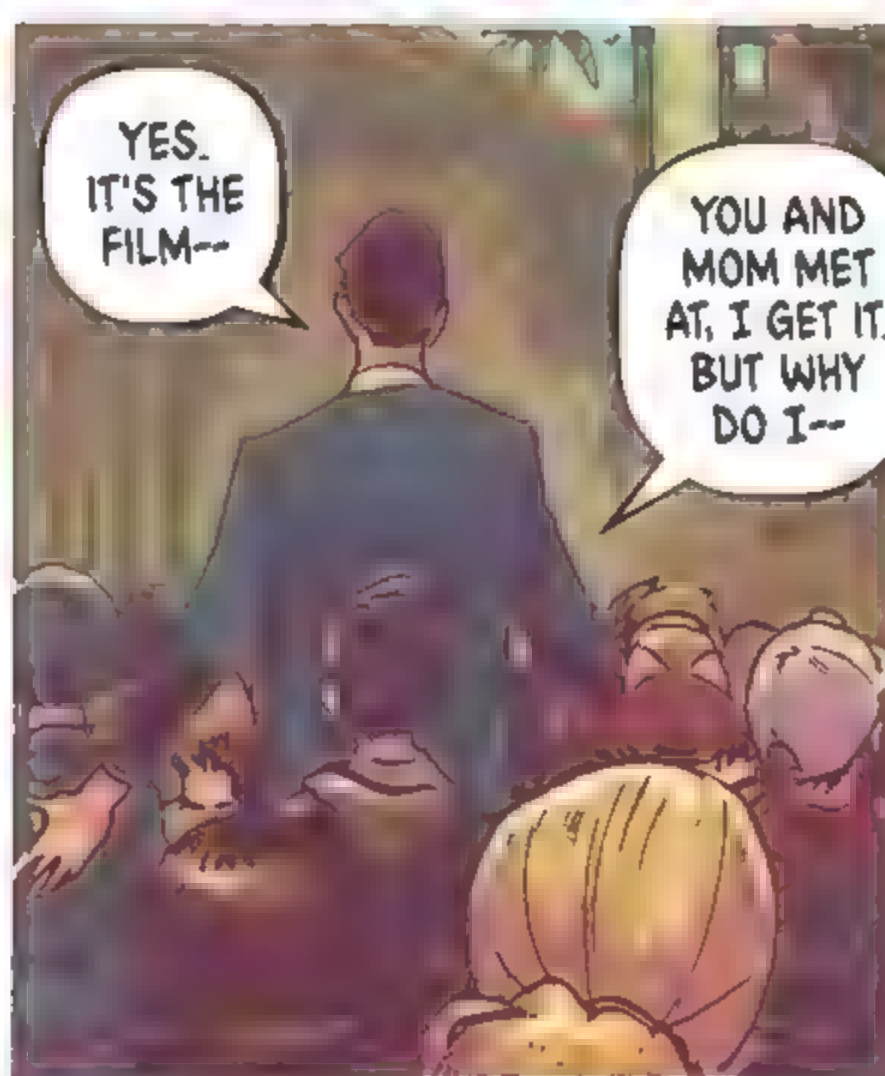
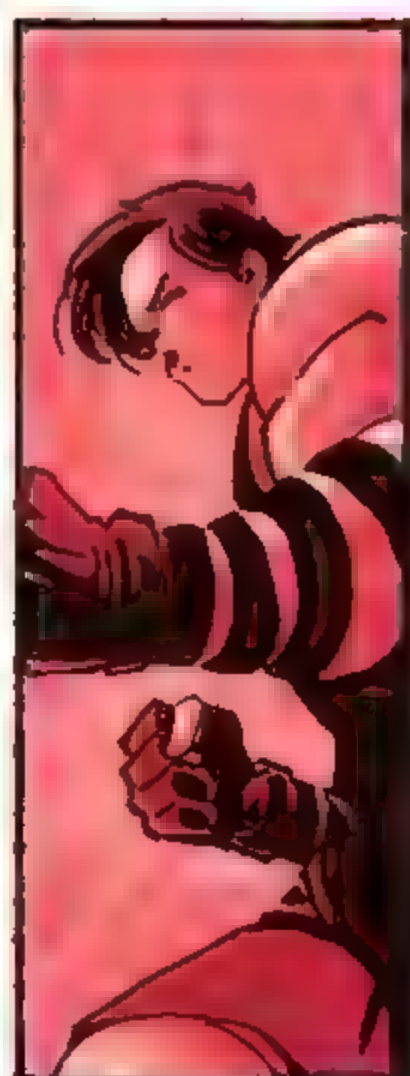
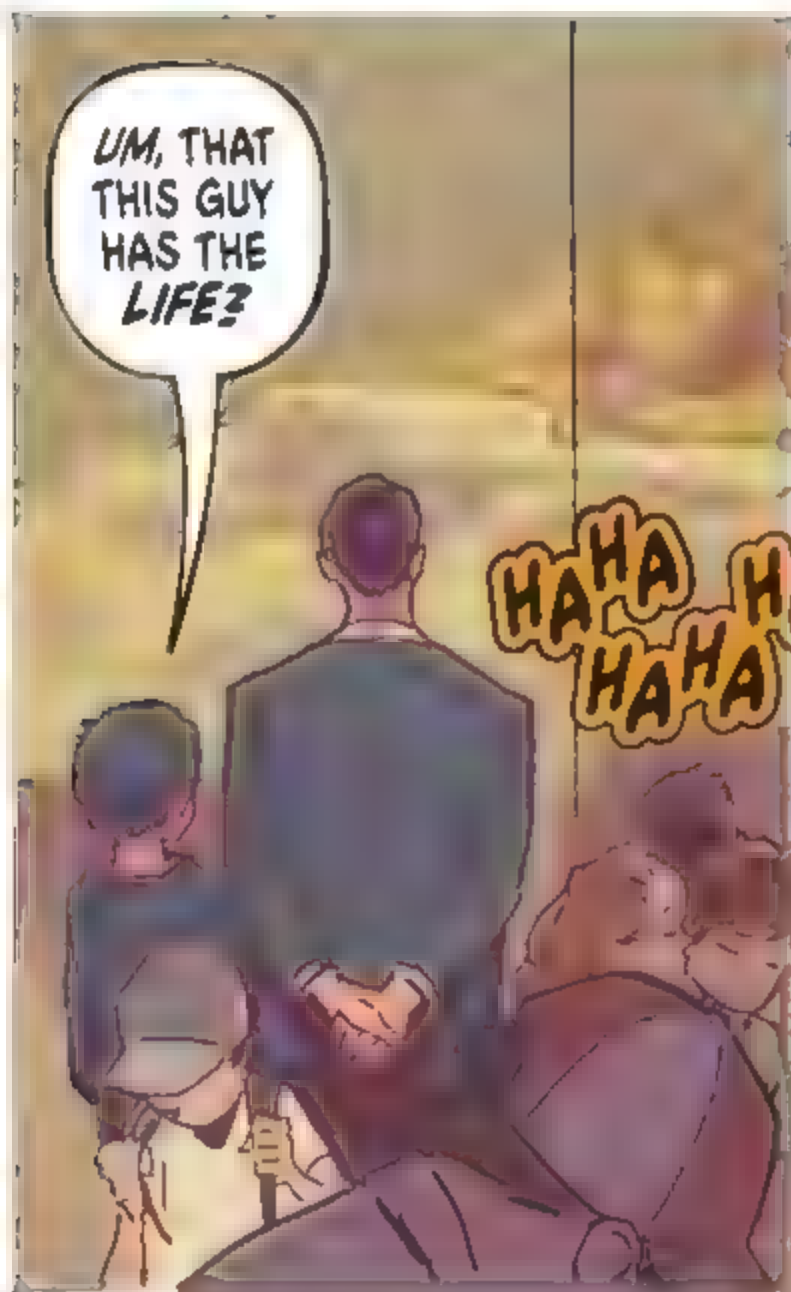
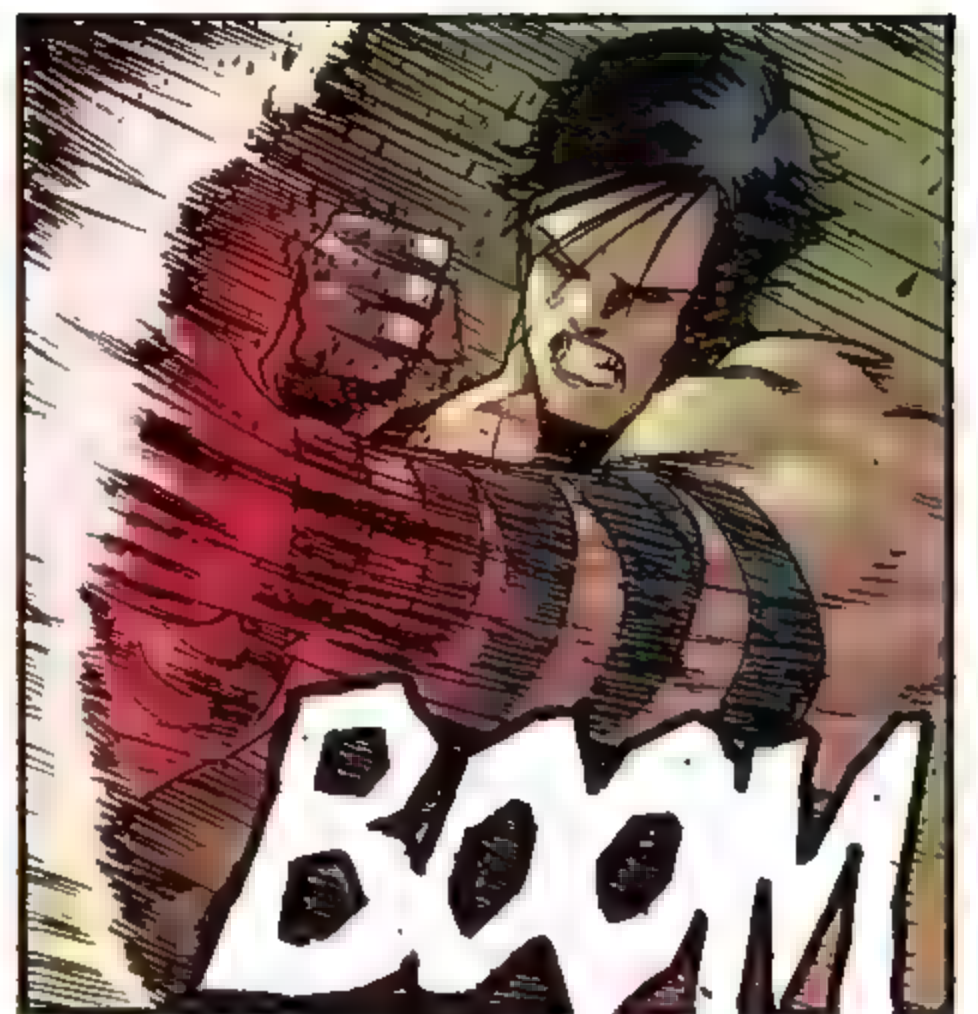
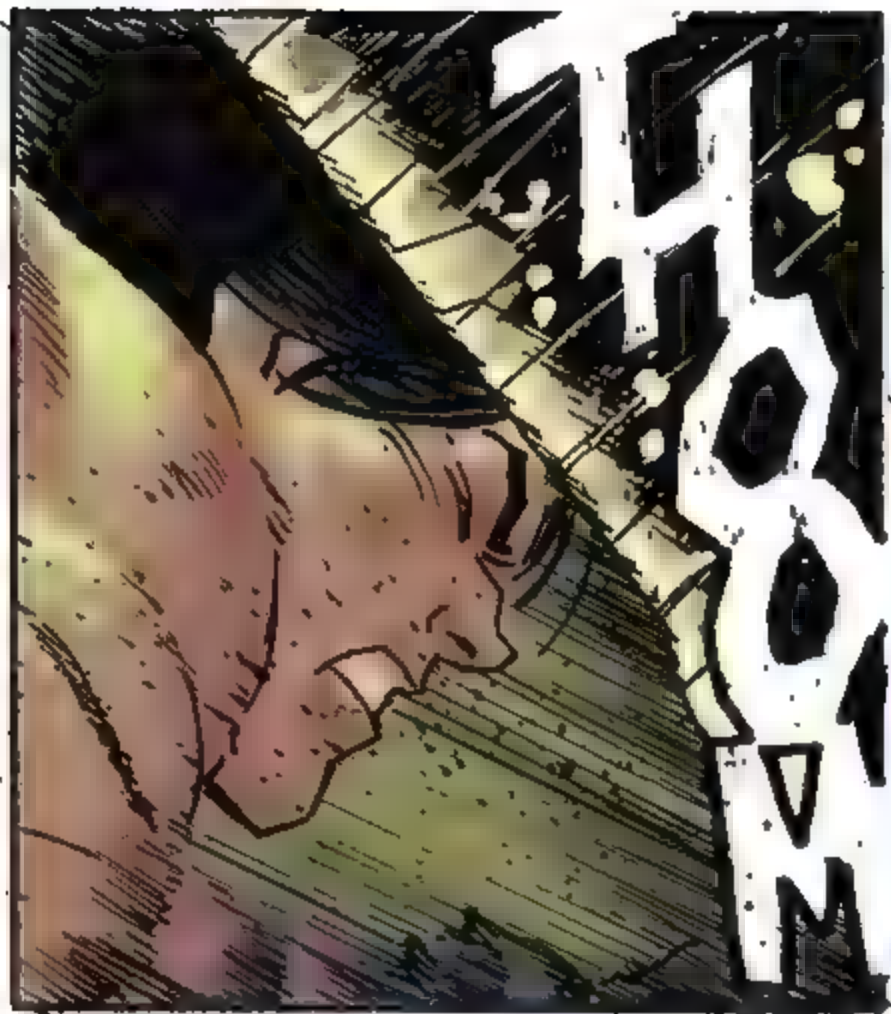


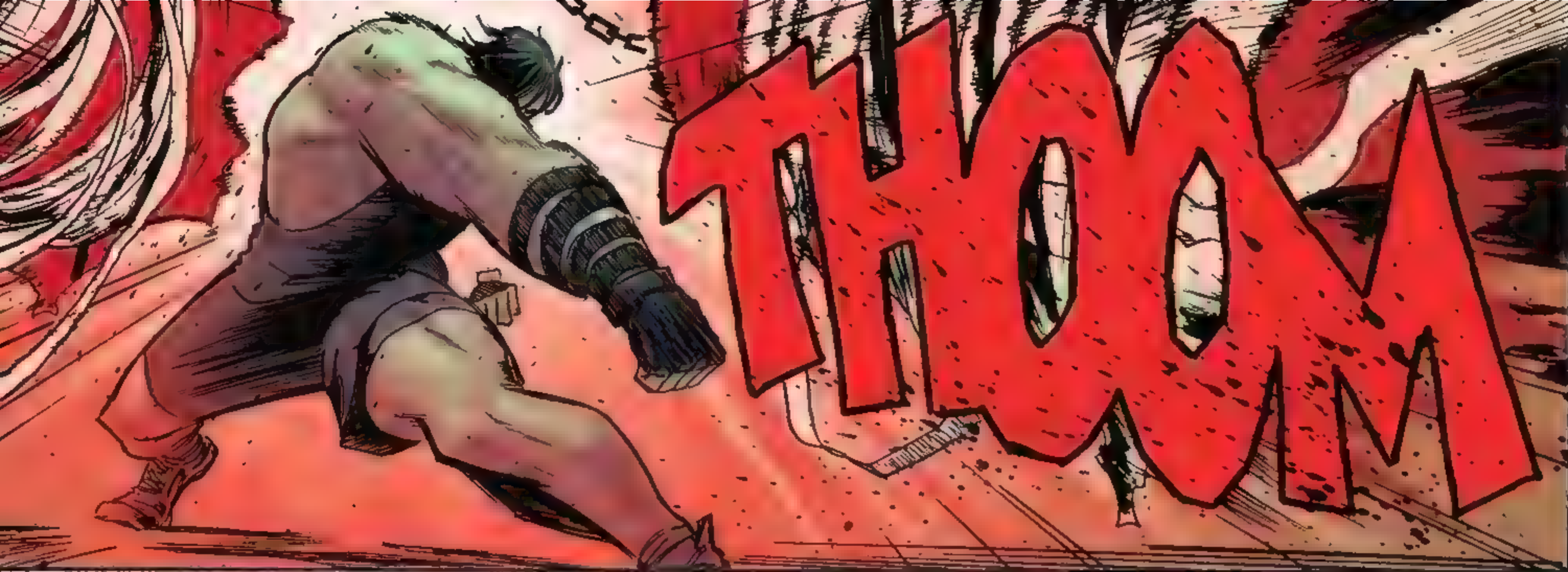
They ring, you serve.
Whether it's in Saigon, Khartoum, or...













DON'T YOU WATCH THOSE NATURE SHOWS, BROTHER? PENGUINS KNOW HOW TO HIDE THEIR EGGS. BESIDES, HE'S OUR BOY. SPEAKING OF WHICH...



I CAN'T.



YOU HAVEN'T COME TO *POKER* IN MONTHS, MAN. EVERYONE'S IN THIS WEEK. *EDDIE, HARVEY, OZ*. I'M EVEN TRYING TO GET *SELINA* TO DIAL--

I SAID I CAN'T.

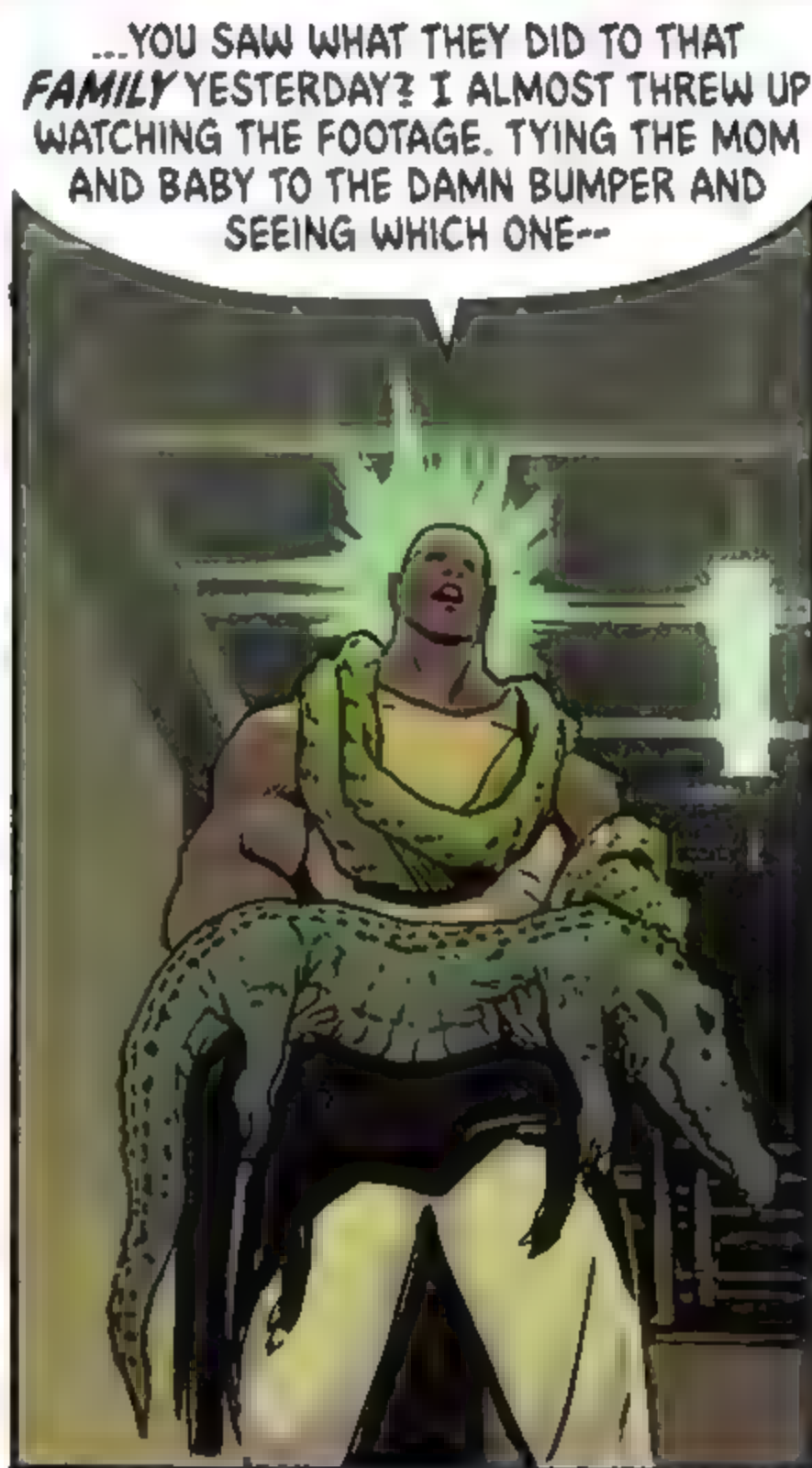


AT *LEAST* TELL ME YOU'RE GOING TO THE *TOWN HALL* TONIGHT.



I'LL BUY YOU A NEW BAG SOON AS I GET PAID.

COME ON, MAN. THE WHOLE CITY'S COMING APART. THESE *PARTY ANIMAL* @#\$%?



...YOU SAW WHAT THEY DID TO THAT *FAMILY* YESTERDAY? I ALMOST THREW UP WATCHING THE FOOTAGE. TYING THE MOM AND BABY TO THE DAMN BUMPER AND SEEING WHICH ONE--



I GOTTA GO.



... WHAT IS GOING *ON* WITH YOU?

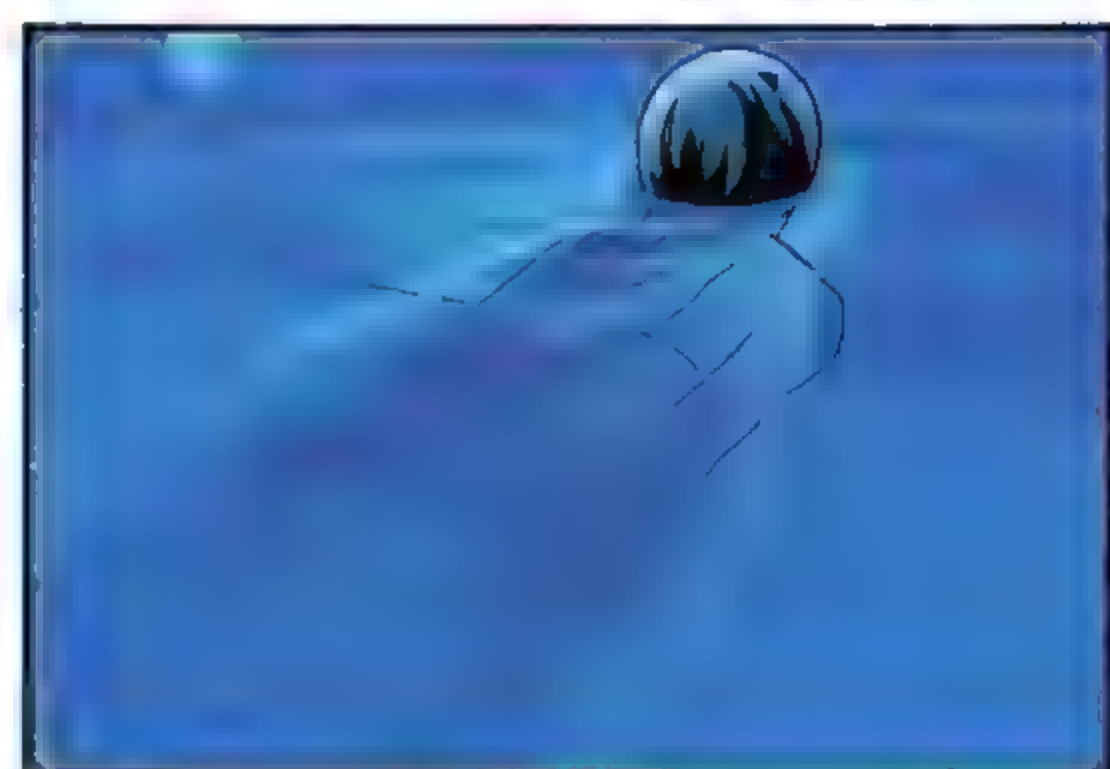
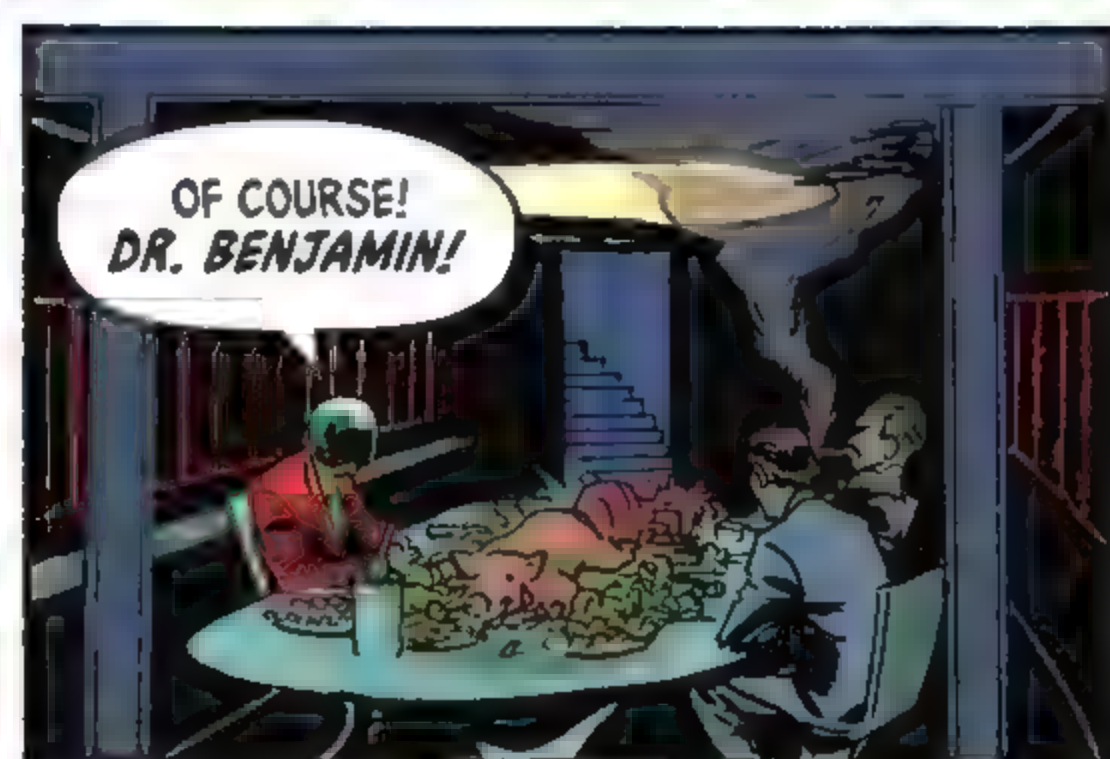
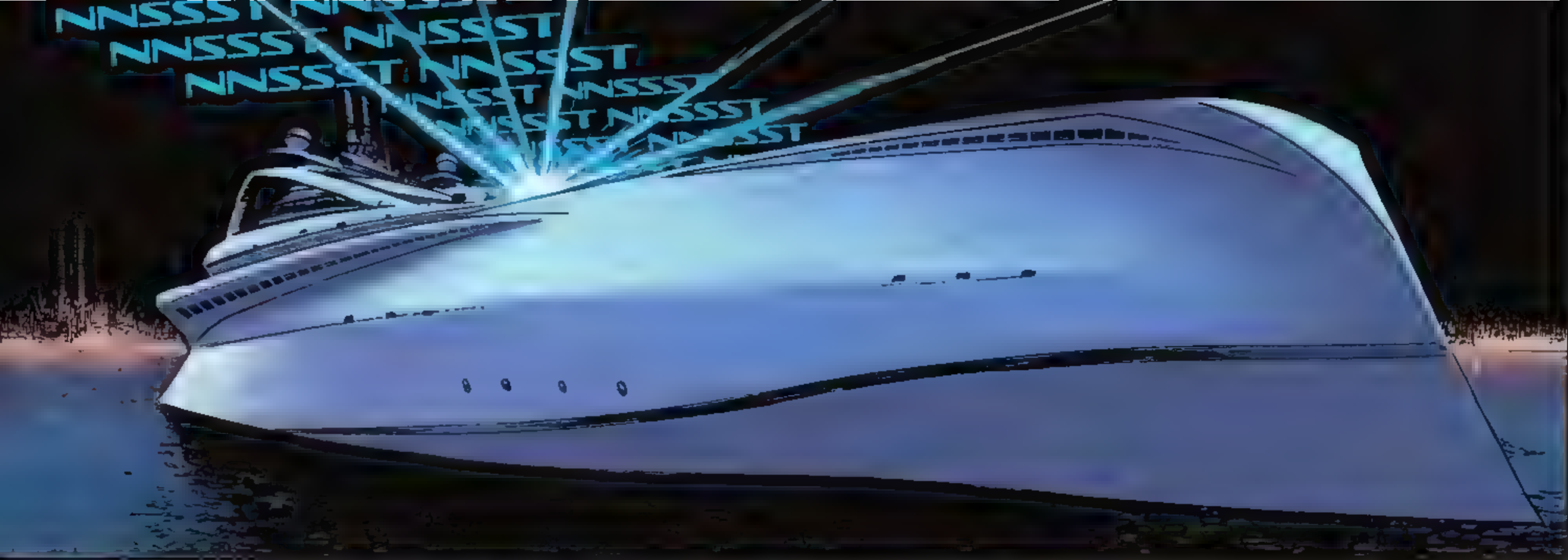


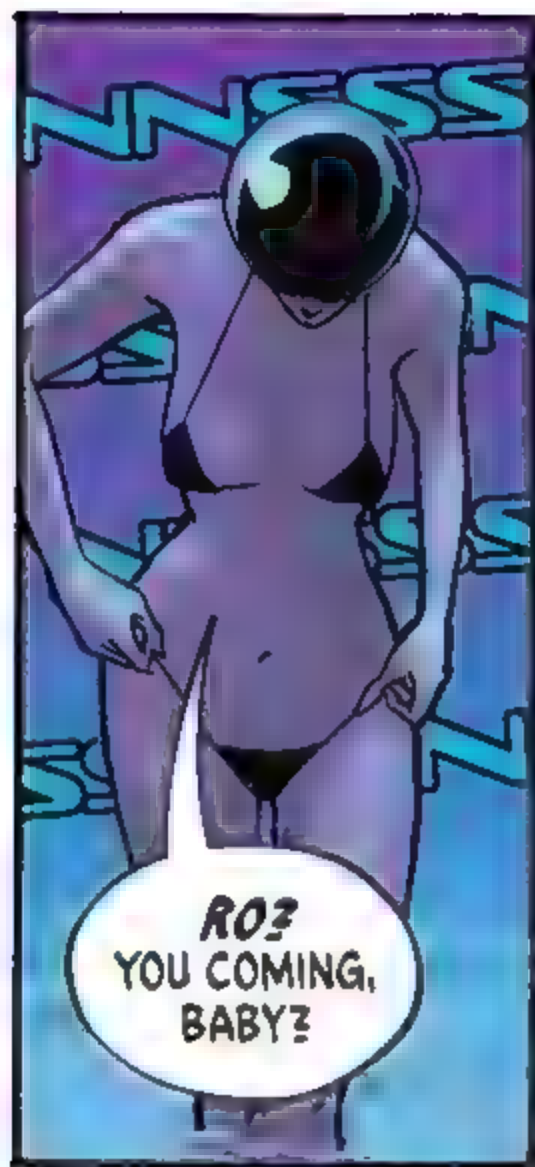
HEY, *BRUCE*! I'M TALKING TO YOU!



THIS IS OUR *HOME*, MAN...

...SOMEONE'S GOT TO DO SOMETHING!

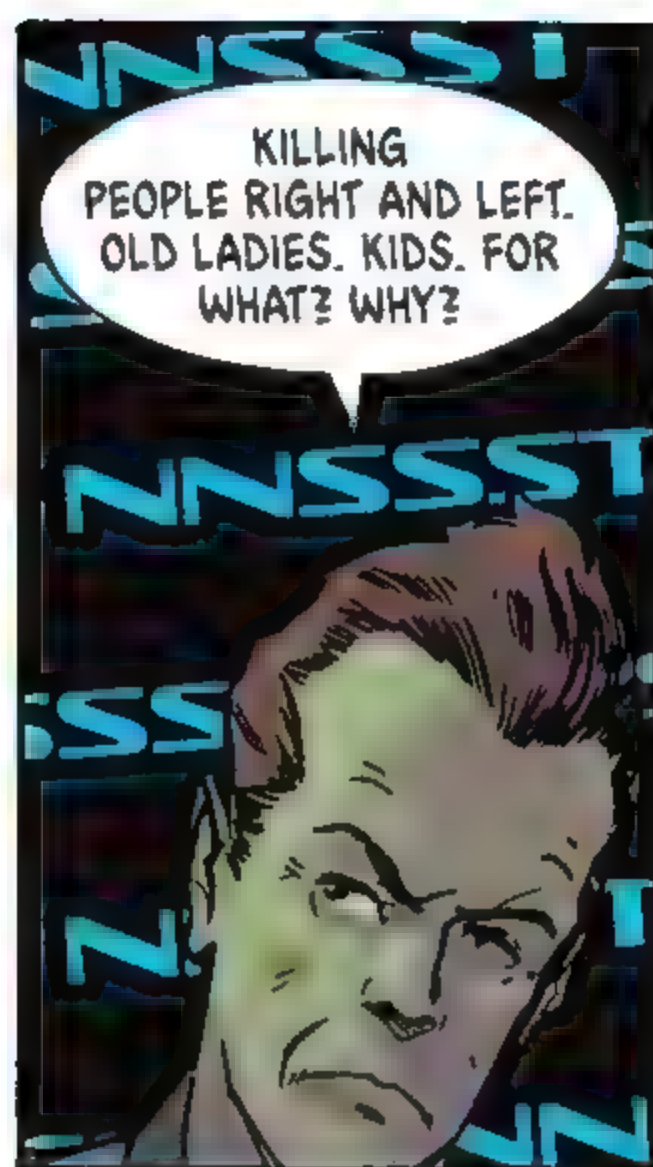




RO?
YOU COMING,
BABY?



WELL RUMOR IS, THESE
PARTY ANIMAL PIECES
OF @#%\$, THEY'RE
YOUR GUYS.



KILLING
PEOPLE RIGHT AND LEFT.
OLD LADIES. KIDS. FOR
WHAT? WHY?



THERE'S *RULES*,
UNDERSTAND? GOTHAM
ISN'T JUST--

ROMAN?

HEY,
KIDDO.

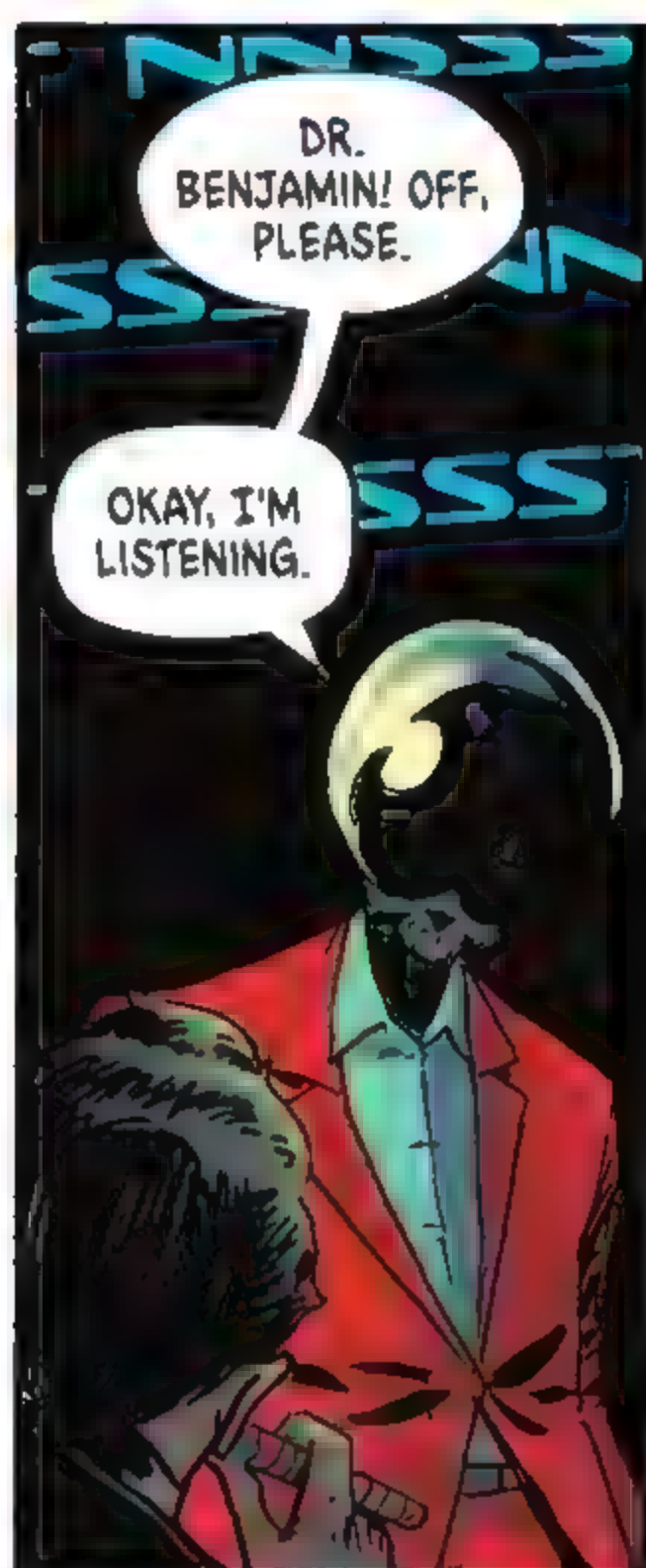
WHEN ARE
YOU ALL COMING
TO DANCE?



MR. MARONIZ
MR. FALCONE?
WHAT DO YOU
SAY? SHALL WE?
THE NIGHT IS
YOUNG.



IT'S THREE
IN THE @#%\$
MORNING! PUT THAT
DAMN KID TO BED,
TURN THE MUSIC
OFF, AND *LISTEN*
UP.



DR.
BENJAMIN! OFF,
PLEASE.

OKAY, I'M
LISTENING.



WE HEAR *RUMORS* ABOUT
YOU. HEAR YOU'RE SOME
KIND OF BIG SHOT...

GOT GUYS ALL OVER THE WORLD, DIFFERENT ANIMALS.
GOATS HERE, *GIRAFFES* THERE. YOU'RE CONNECTED
TO SOME GLOBAL, SICK, ILLUMINATI
WHATEVER THE HELL.

BUT THE TRUTH IS WE'VE
BEEN IN BUSINESS HERE
FOR 150 YEARS.
UNDERSTAND? A *CENTURY*
AND A *HALF* THAT'S
HISTORY. YOU NEED
TO RESPECT IT.

THAT'S RIGHT. AND
WE'VE GOT *BROTHERS*
AND *COUSINS*, AND GUYS
ALL OVER TOWN. SO TAKE
YOUR LITTLE PARTY BOAT
AND SAIL AWAY BY DAWN.
DAWN OR YOU'RE DEAD.
YOU HEAR US?

BABY. SHOW
THEM THE
MASKS.

GOOD IDEA, SWEETHEART.

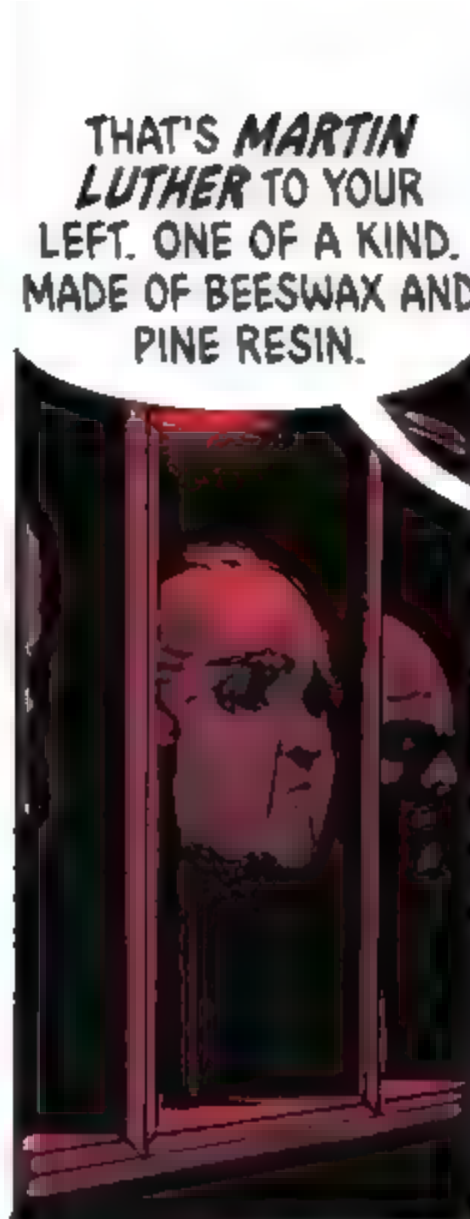
FRIENDS, I'M
AFRAID YOU HAVE ME
ALL WRONG. *HISTORY*
IS WHAT I'M ALL ABOUT.
THAT'S WHAT WE'RE
CELEBRATING
HERE...

...ITS
END.



WOW. MORE MASKS.

NOT JUST ANY MASKS. **DEATH MASKS**. I COLLECT THEM. THAT ONE IS RUMORED TO BE **SOCRATES** HIMSELF. ONLY TWO EXIST IN THE WORLD. ONE IN MYCENAEAN GOLD AND THIS ONE, MADE OF VIRGIN MARBLE DUST.



THAT'S **MARTIN LUTHER** TO YOUR LEFT. ONE OF A KIND. MADE OF BEESWAX AND PINE RESIN.



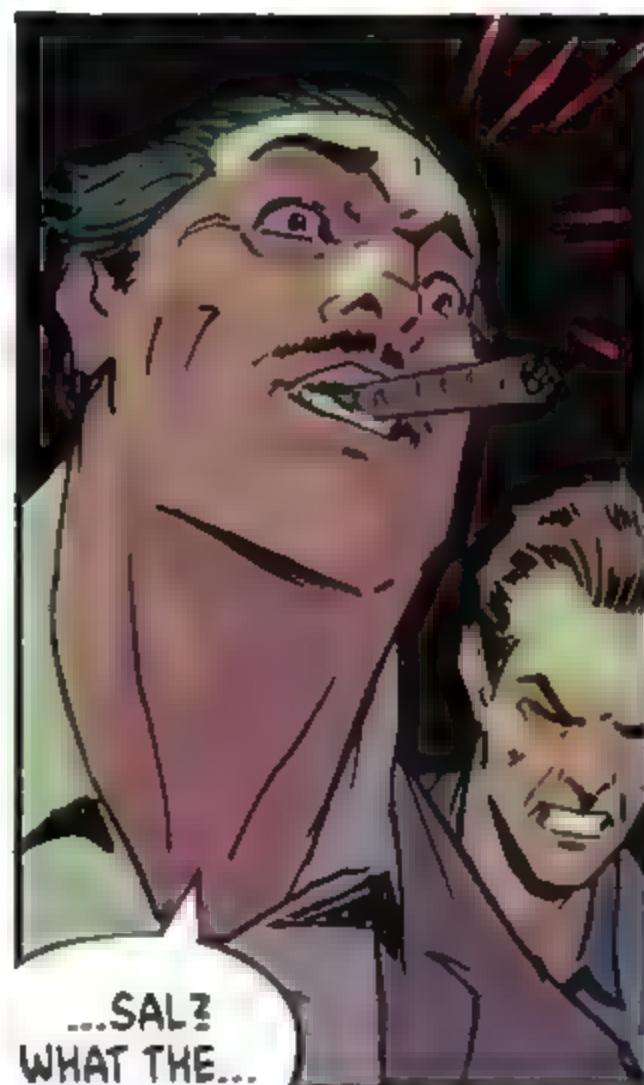
THAT'S **GEORGE WASHINGTON** THERE. GYPSUM PLASTER FROM VIRGINIA'S OWN QUARRIES.



AND THAT **THERE**, MR. MARONI...



...IS YOUR **BROTHER**.



...SAL? WHAT THE...



AND **THAT'S** YOUR **COUSIN**, MR. FALCONE.

AND **ALL** THE REST OF THEM ALONGSIDE.



GURK!

WITH TWO PLACES LEFT, JUST FOR YOU. RIGHT, KIDDO?



YOU #&%&--



DR. BENJAMIN! TURN IT BACK UP, PLEASE!

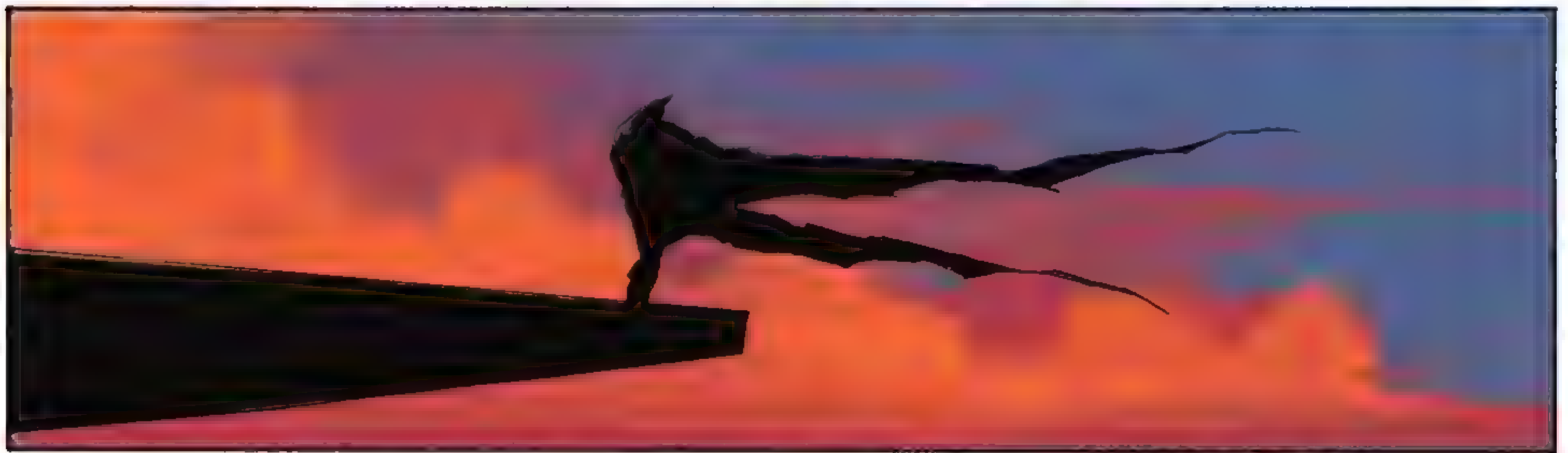


--SIX MORE
MURDERED
JUST TODAY--

THE QUESTION IS,
WHO ARE THESE
MONSTERS, THE
"PARTY ANIMALS"?
SOME SAY KIDS
GONE MAD--



--HACKED APART WITH
MACHETES. WE ARE WARNING
YOU, THE FOOTAGE YOU'RE
ABOUT TO SEE IS DISTURBING.
YOU MIGHT WANT SMALL
CHILDREN TO--

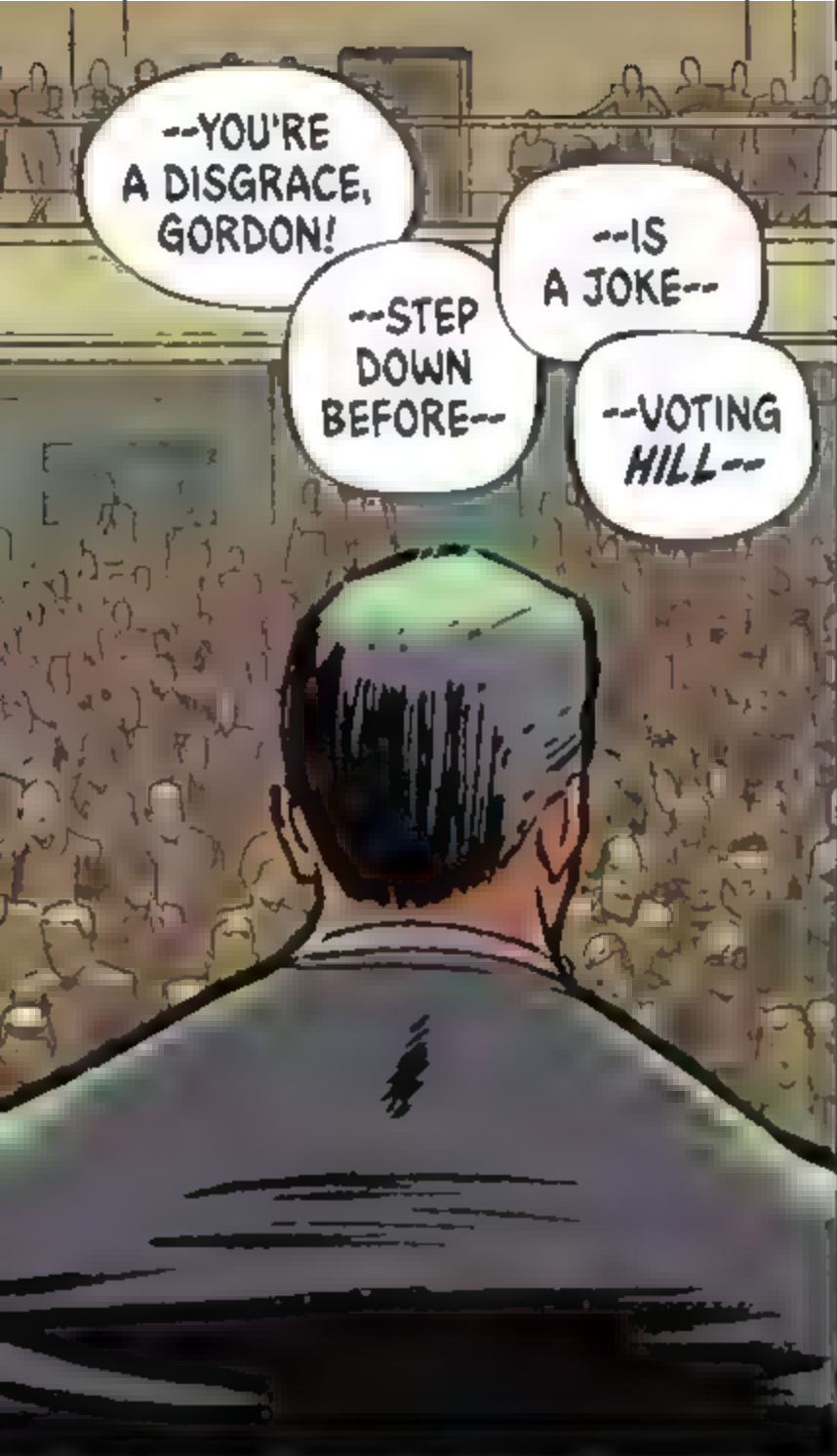


--TRUTH IS, ALL OF US HERE AT THE
STATION ARE PRAYING FOR GOTHAM.
FOR ITS PEOPLE, ITS FUTURE...



--TONIGHT MAYOR JIM GORDON
IS HOLDING AN EMERGENCY TOWN
HALL TO DISCUSS WHAT TO DO
ABOUT THE PARTY ANIMALS'
REIGN OF TERROR. HERE'S
HOPING IT'S EVENTFUL...





--YOU'RE A DISGRACE, GORDON!

--STEP DOWN BEFORE--

--IS A JOKE--

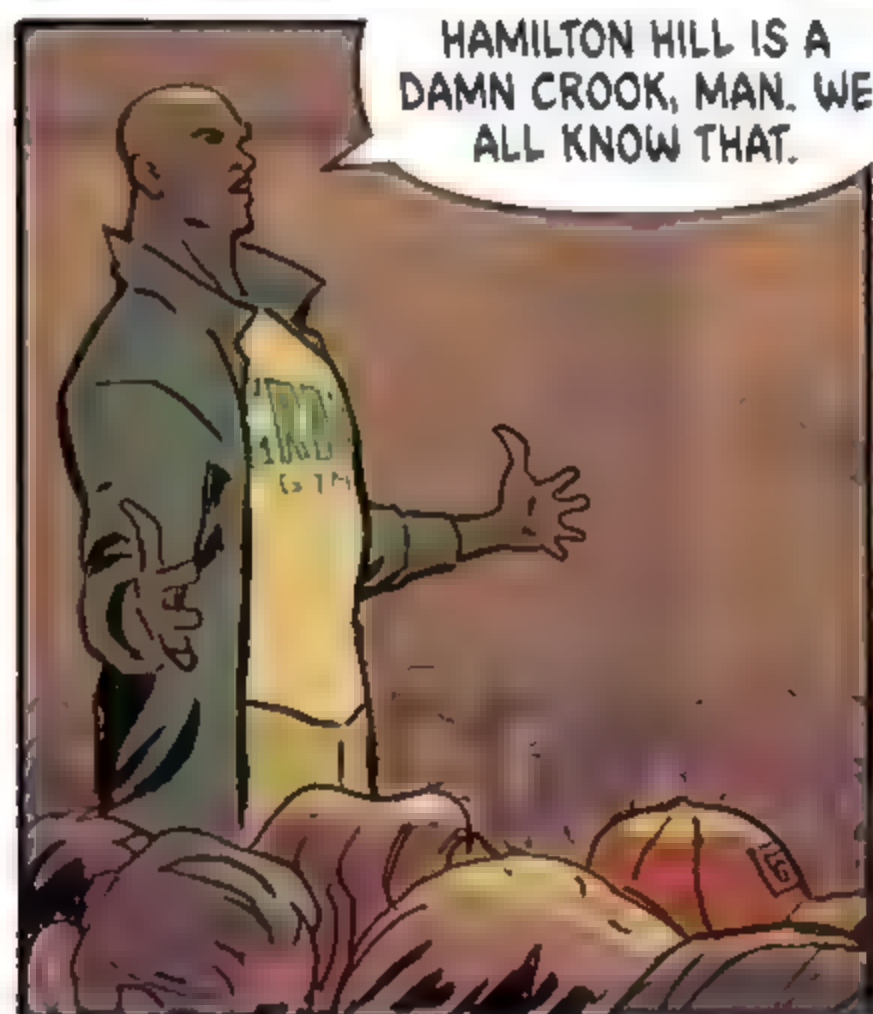
--VOTING HILL--



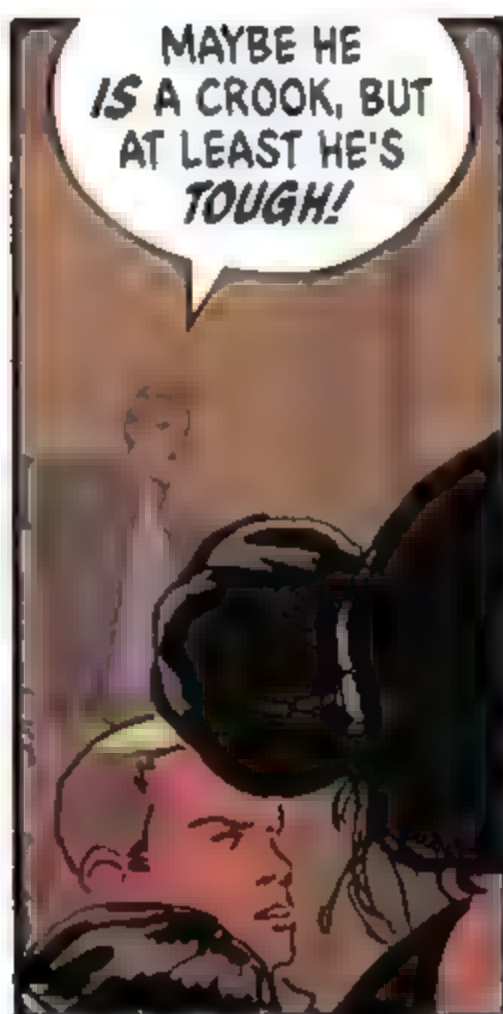
PLEASE, EVERYONE. ONE AT A TIME!

ALL RIGHT, GO AHEAD, SIR.

YOU RAN ON YOUR RECORD AS A COP, GORDON. AND WE GAVE YOU A CHANCE, BUT UNDER MAYOR HILL, AT LEAST WE WEREN'T BEING KILLED OFF!



HAMILTON HILL IS A DAMN CROOK, MAN. WE ALL KNOW THAT.



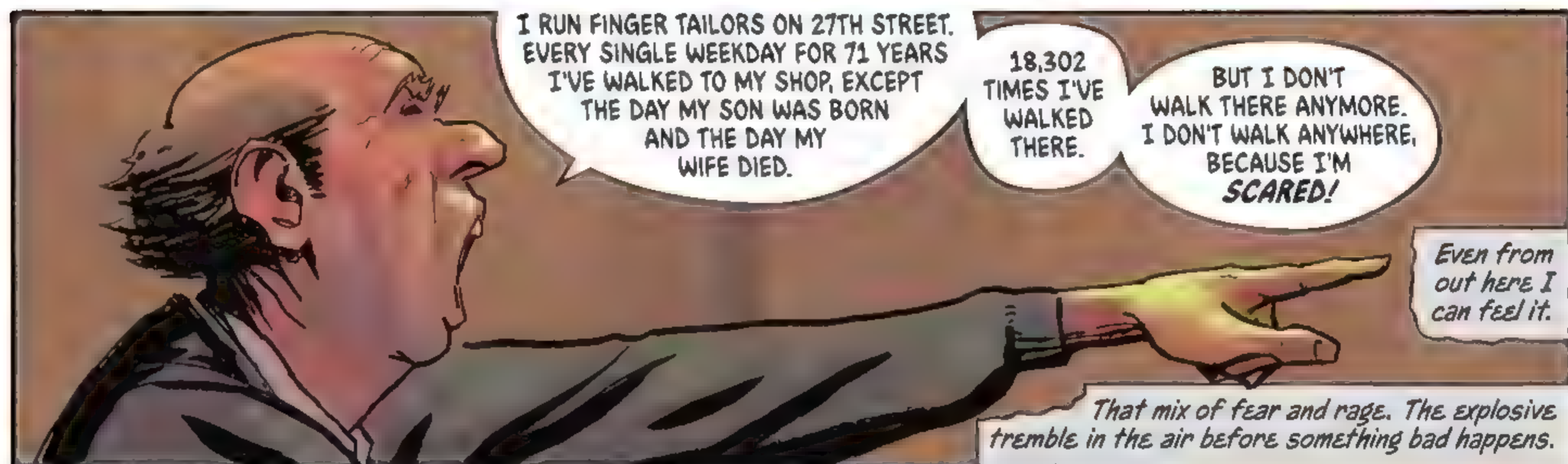
MAYBE HE IS A CROOK, BUT AT LEAST HE'S TOUGH!



HE'D FIGHT BACK!



WE ARE FIGHTING BACK, BUT *THIS* GANG, WE HAVE NO IDEA--



I RUN FINGER TAILORS ON 27TH STREET. EVERY SINGLE WEEKDAY FOR 71 YEARS I'VE WALKED TO MY SHOP, EXCEPT THE DAY MY SON WAS BORN AND THE DAY MY WIFE DIED.

18,302 TIMES I'VE WALKED THERE.

BUT I DON'T WALK THERE ANYMORE. I DON'T WALK ANYWHERE, BECAUSE I'M SCARED!

Even from out here I can feel it.

That mix of fear and rage. The explosive tremble in the air before something bad happens.



And then I see them.

Ape skulls and bad prom clothes. Heavily armed.

Laughing and giddy. Gleeful.

This is going to be bad.



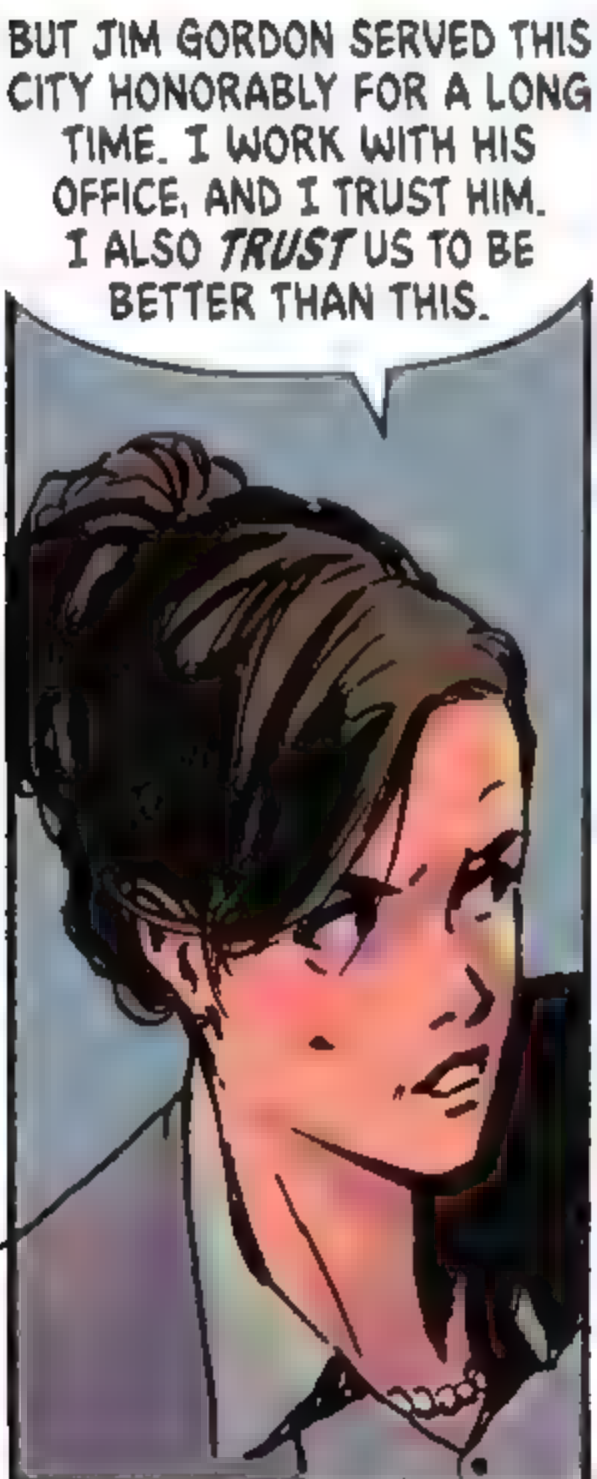
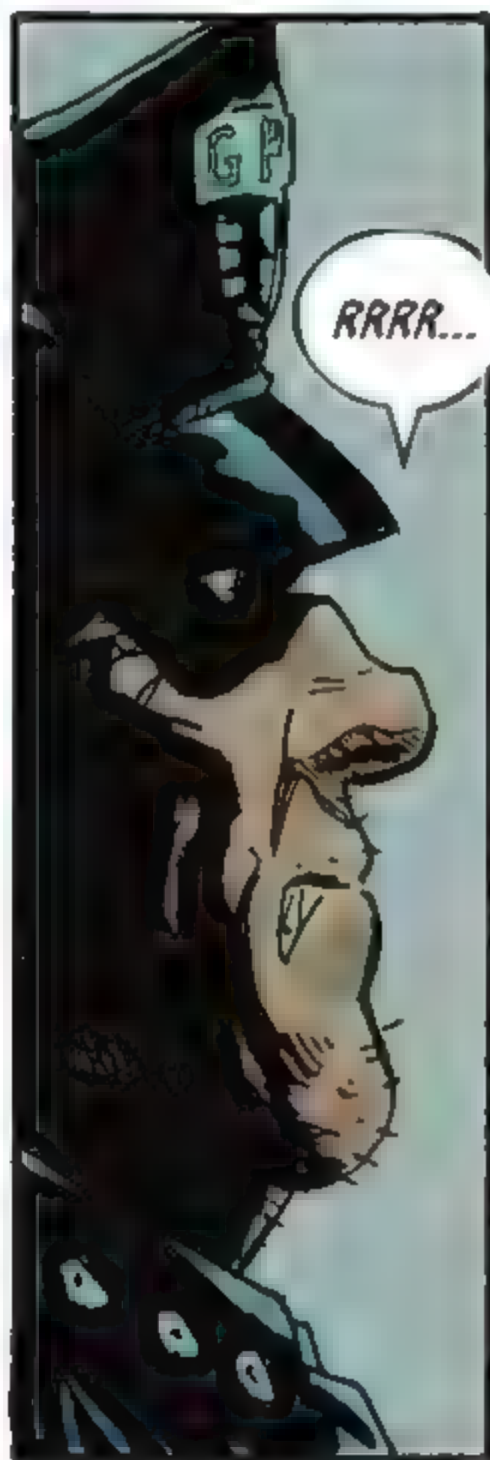
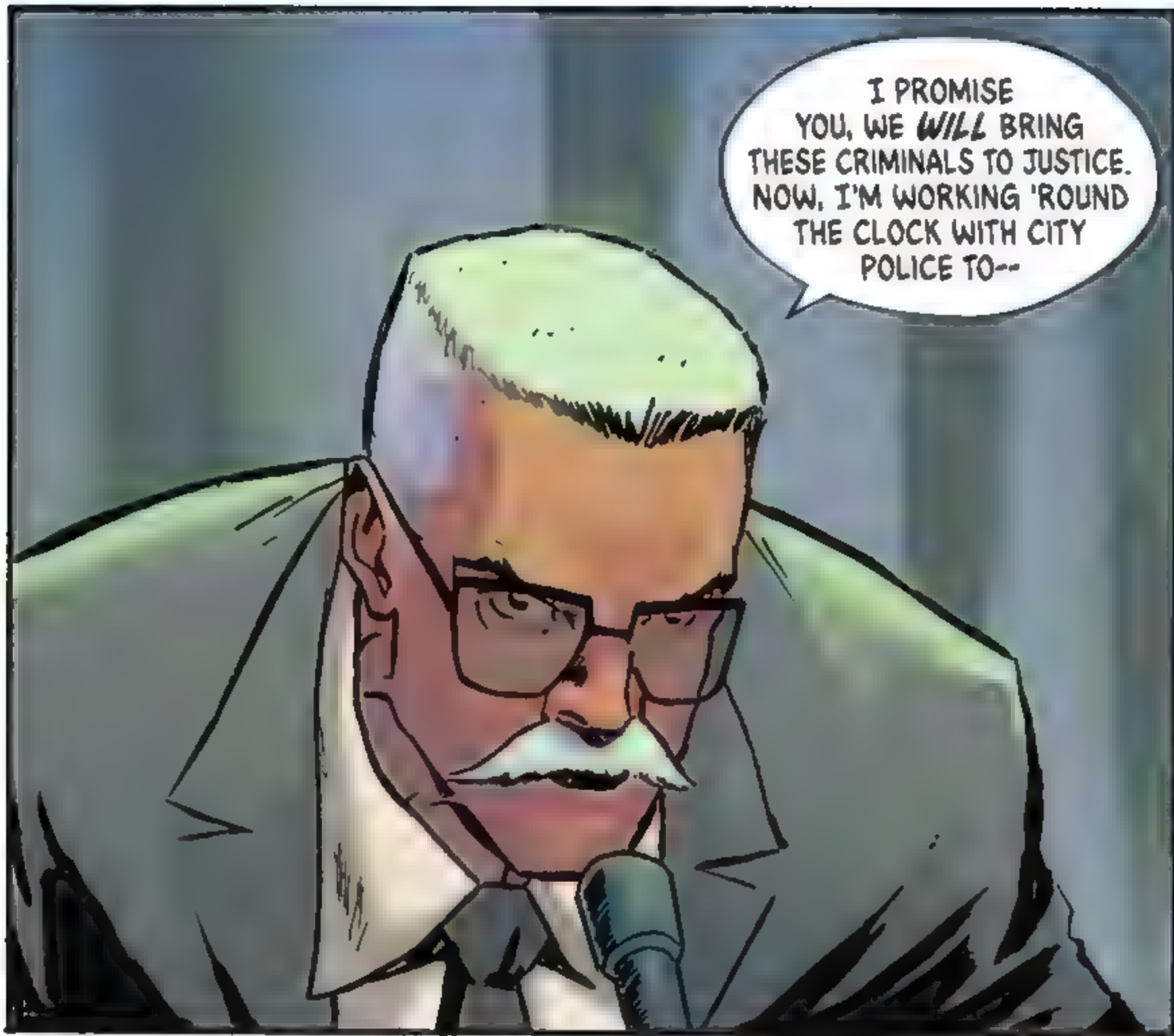
PENNYWORTH REPORTING, SIR. PARTY ANIMALS ARE AT THE SITE. HEAVILY ARMED.

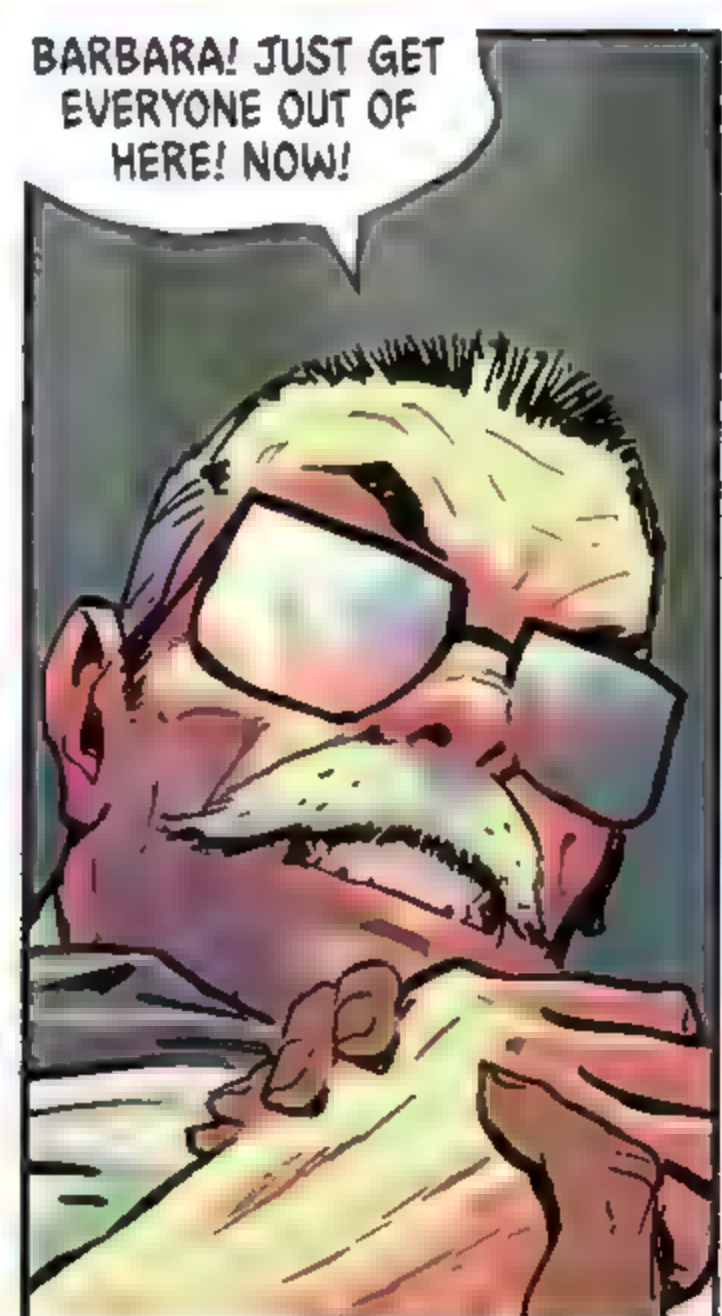
COPY. REPORT BACK AFTER INCIDENT.



MASS CASUALTIES POSSIBLE, SIR. PERMISSION TO ENGAGE IF--

PERMISSION DENIED, PENNYWORTH. WHATEVER HAPPENS THERE, YOU OBSERVE ONLY.







ANYONE WANT TO
BEG? TELL US ABOUT
YOUR KIDS? YOUR SICK
GRANDMA? WE
LOVE THAT...

NO?
ALL RIGHT,
THEN.

RIP
'EM UP!

CHIK
CHIK



ACK!

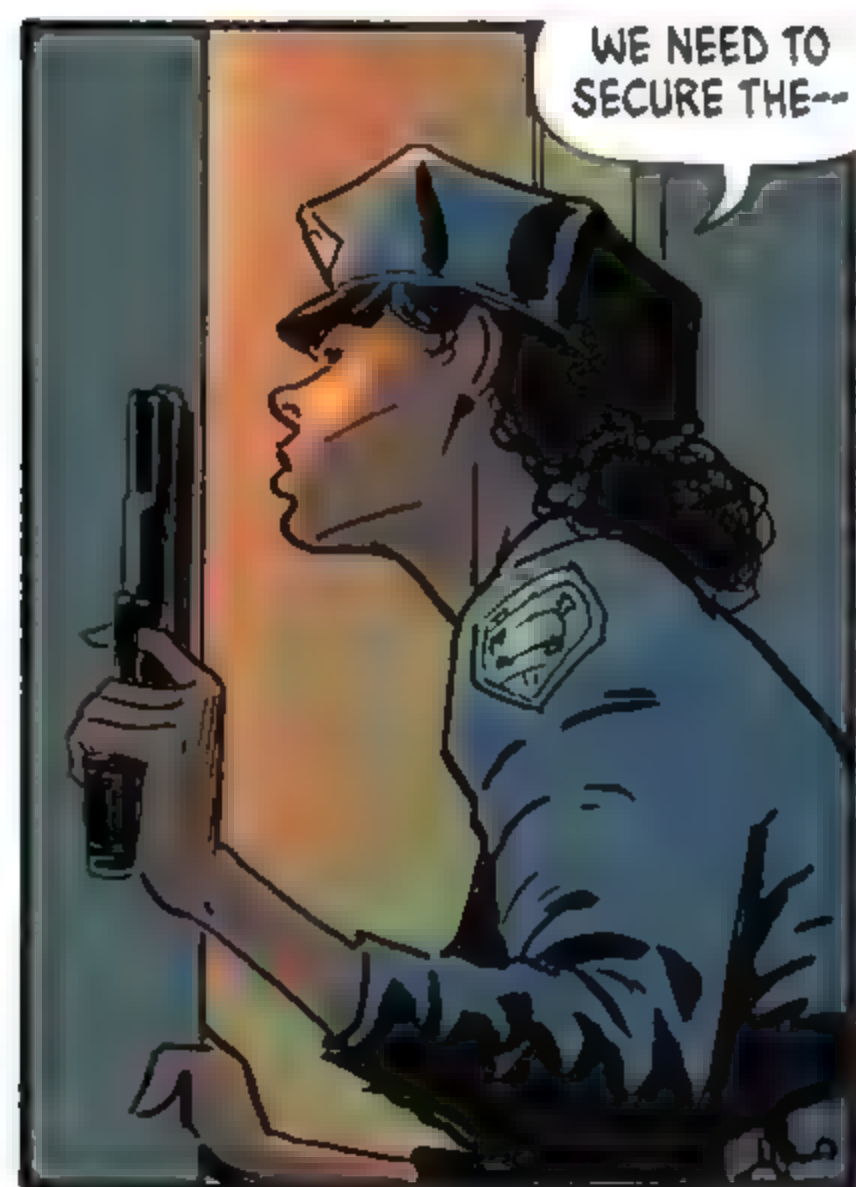


WHAT
THE HELL WAS
THAT?

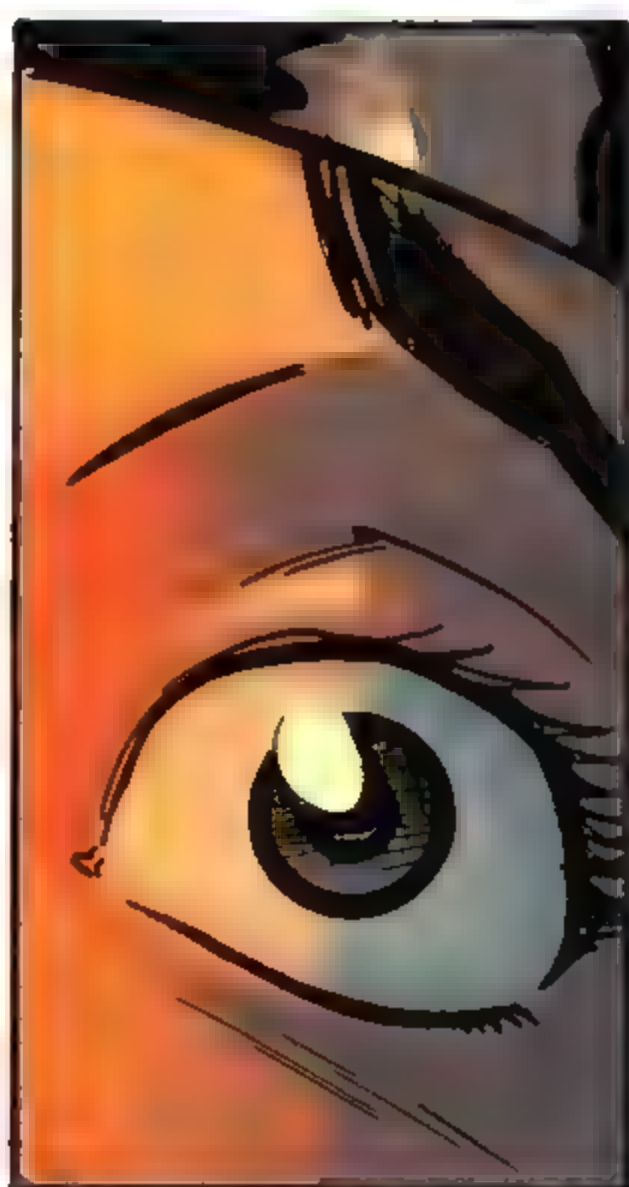
EVERYONE
MOVE TO THE
BACK! AND STAY
DOWN!



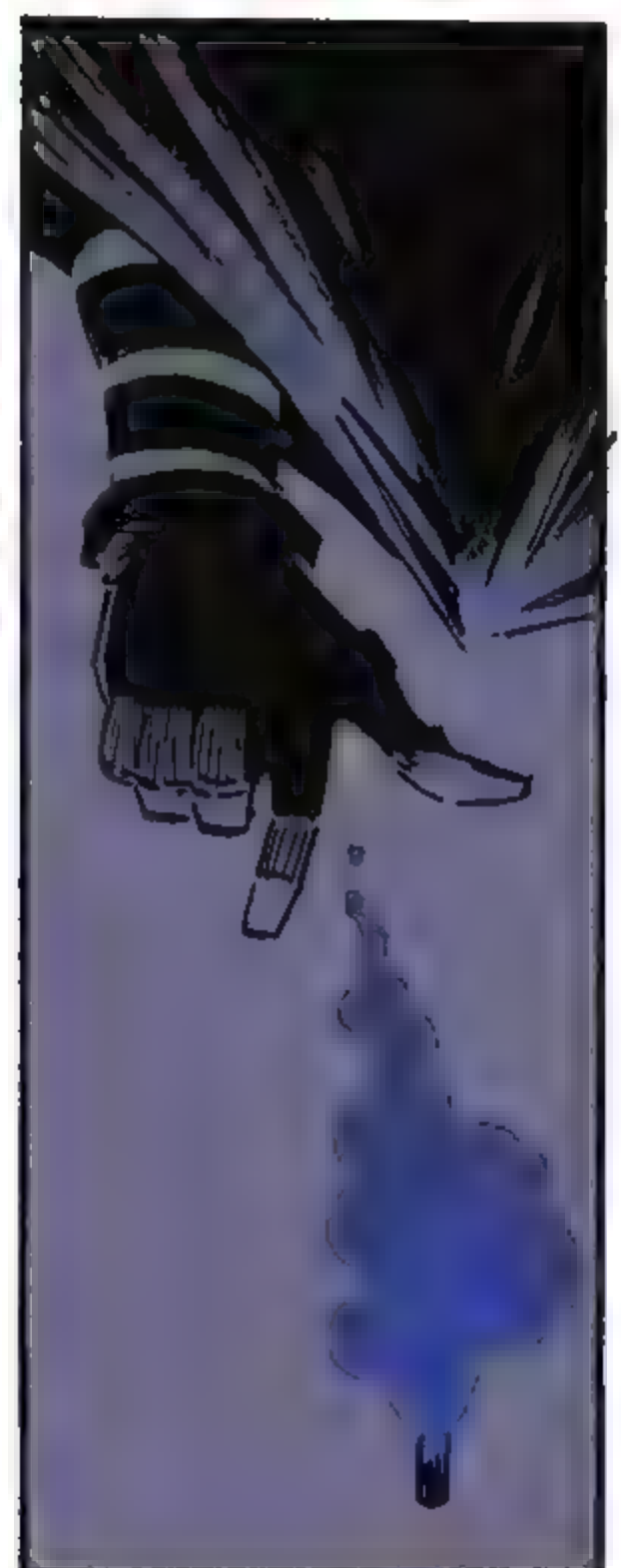
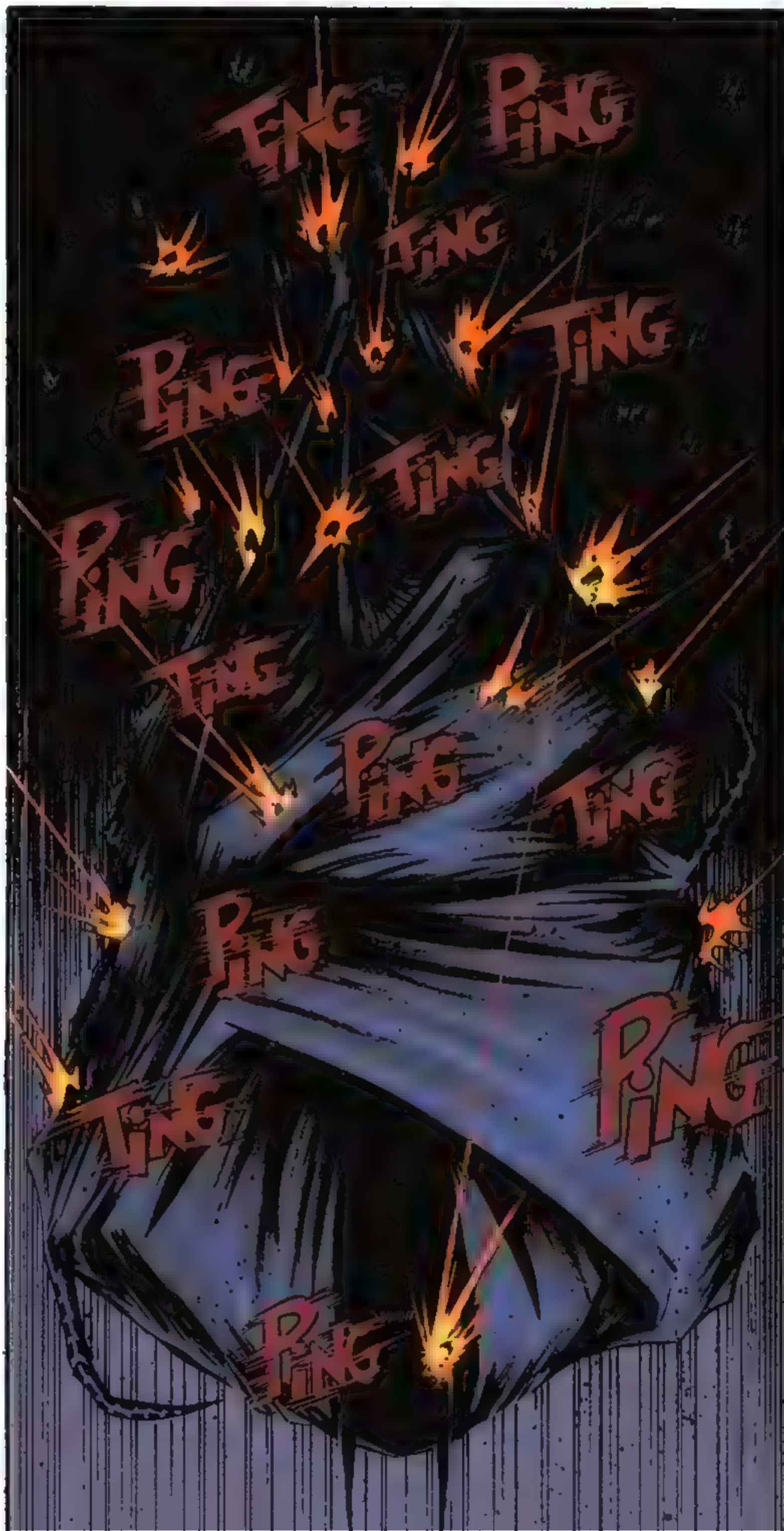
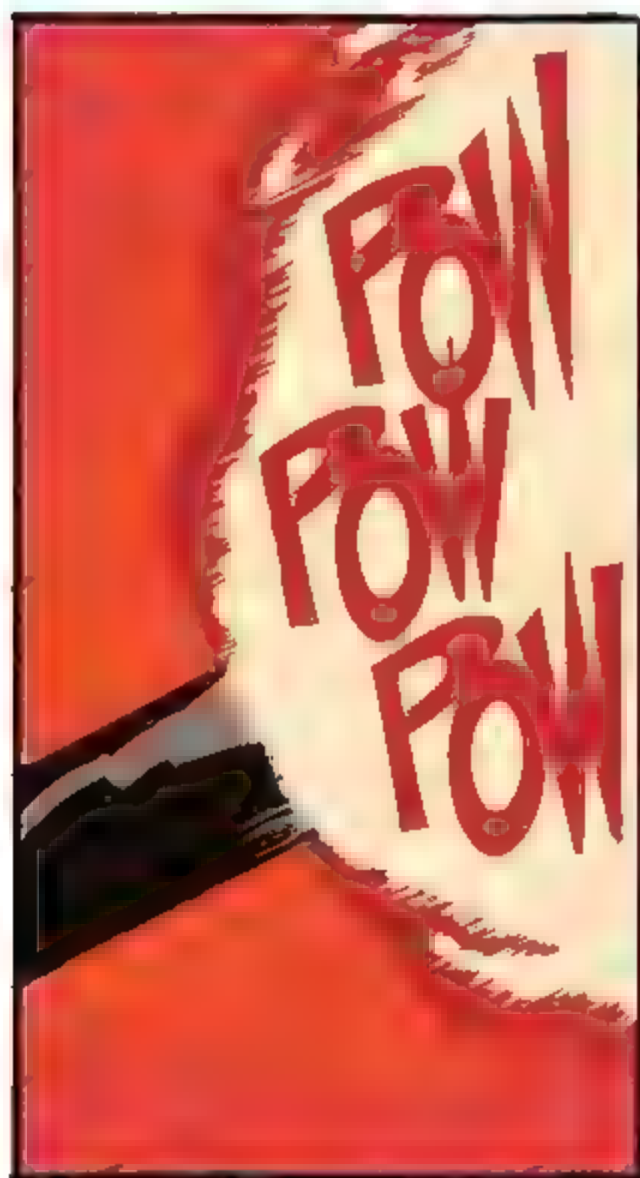
MY GOD...
THERE'S **DOZENS**
OF THEM OUT THERE!
A WHOLE
ARMY!



WE NEED TO
SECURE THE--

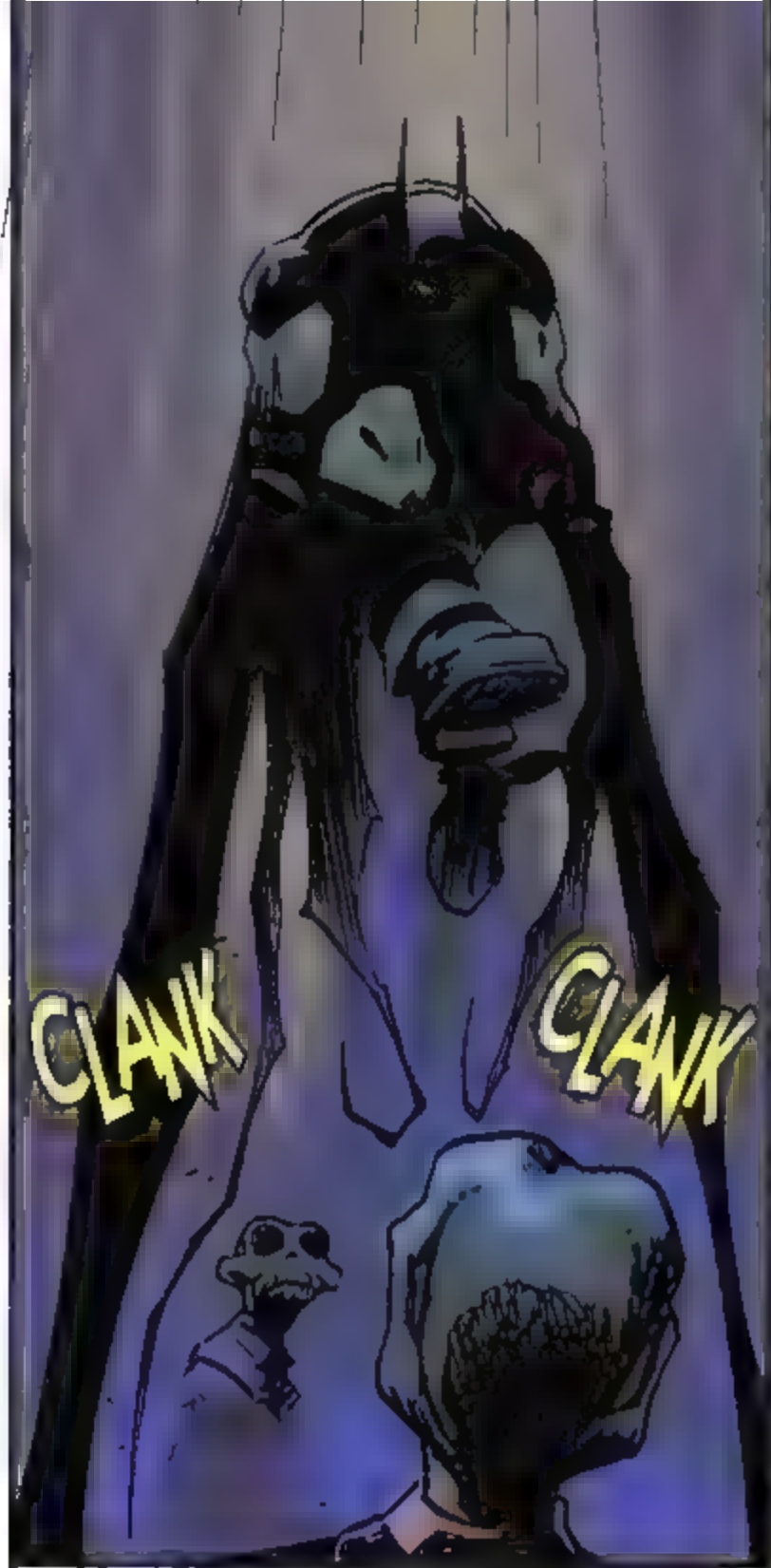


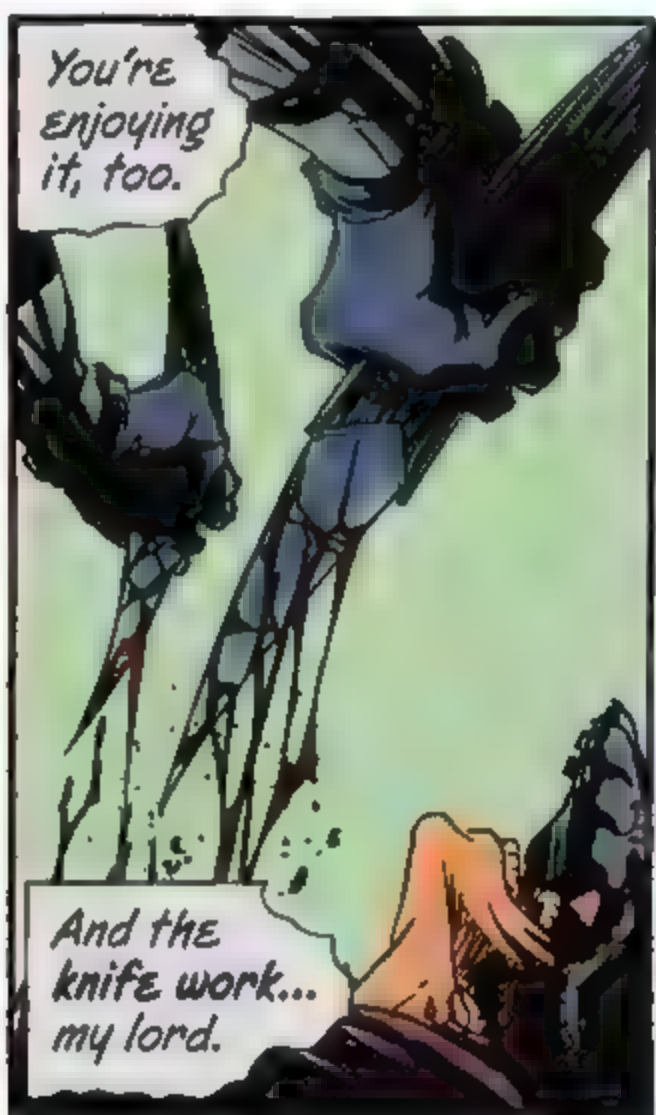
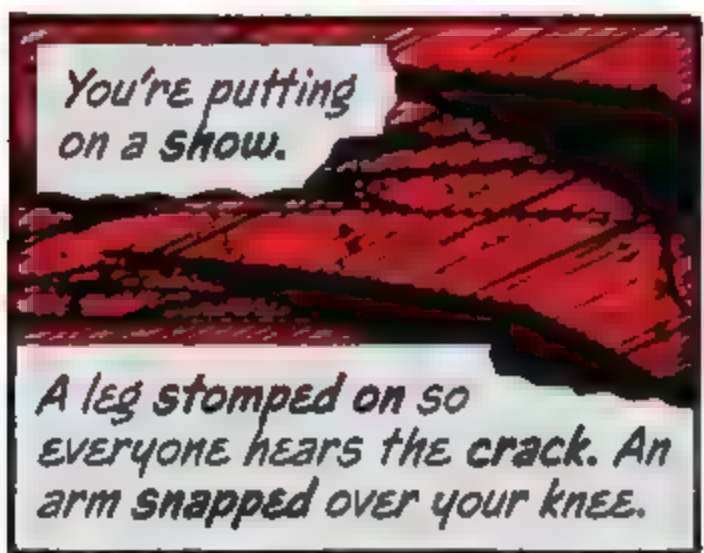
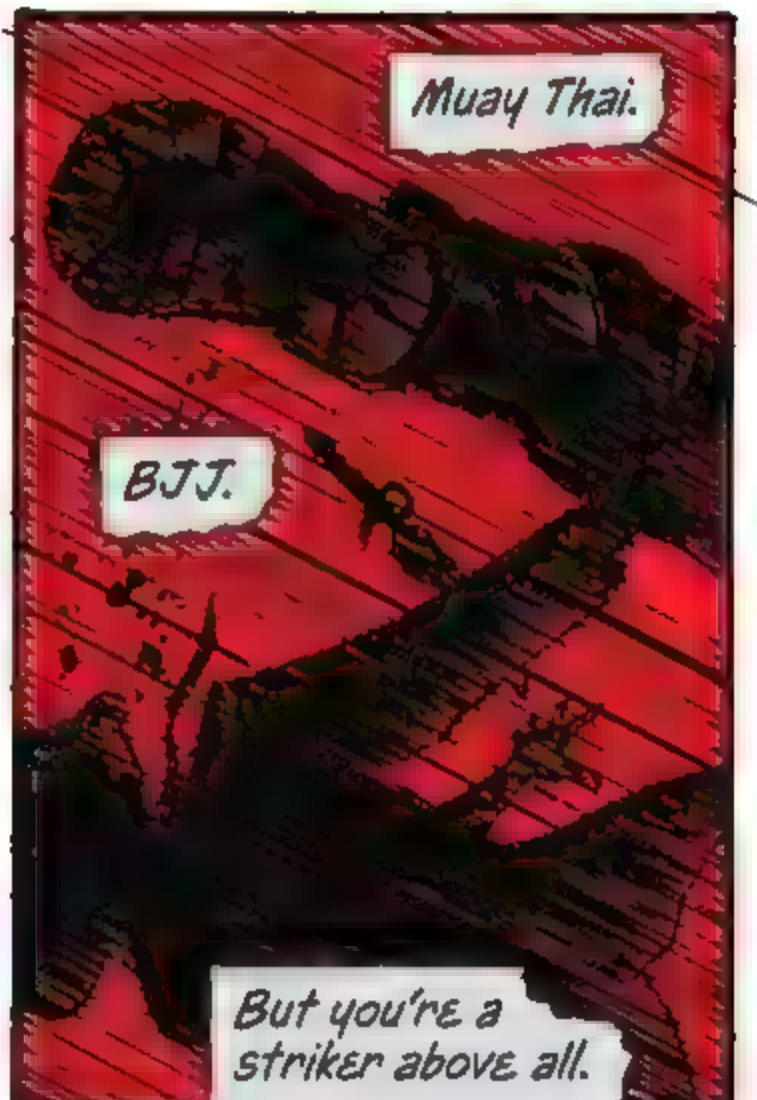
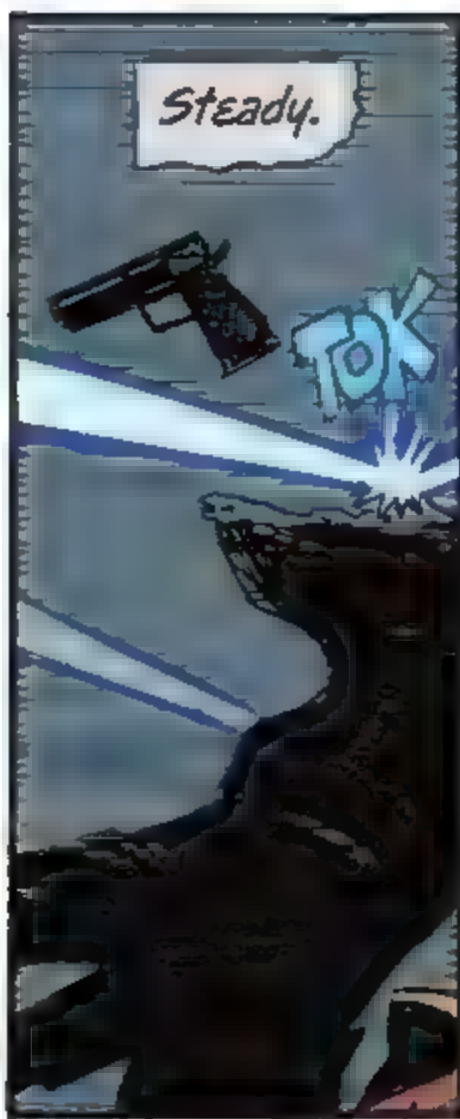
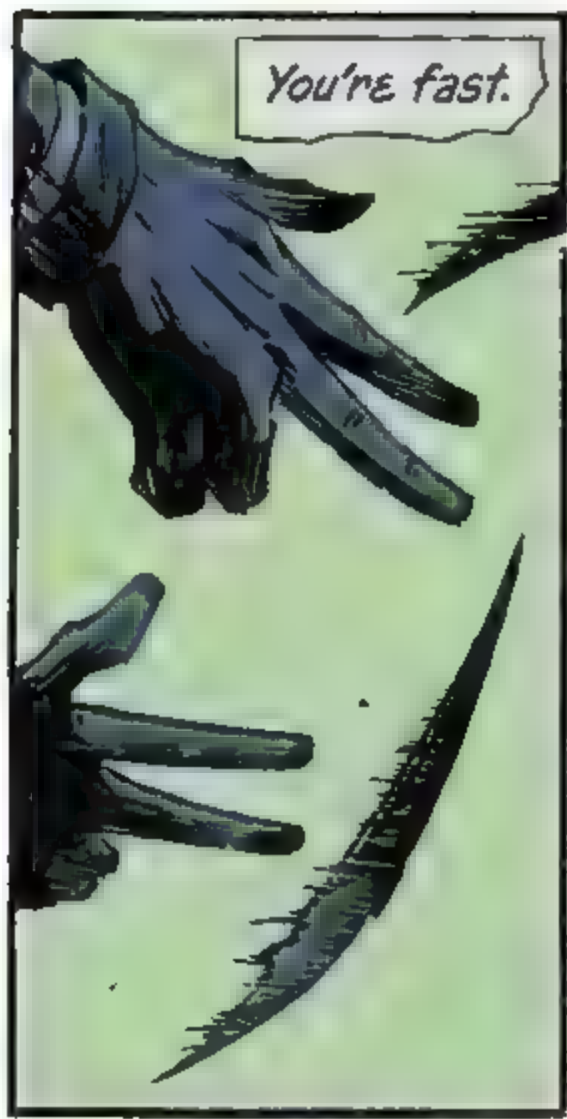
WHATEVER
YOU HEAR, YOU
DO NOT OPEN
THIS DOOR.





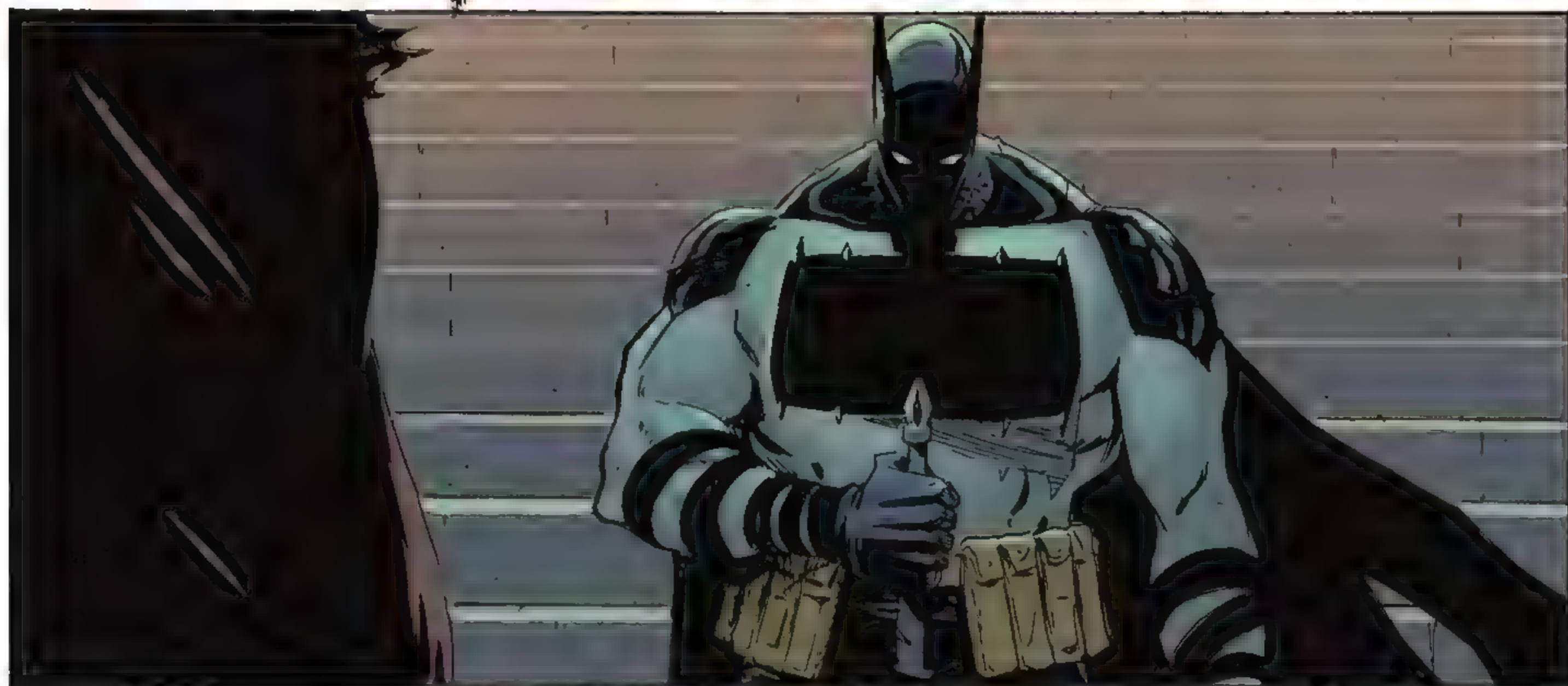


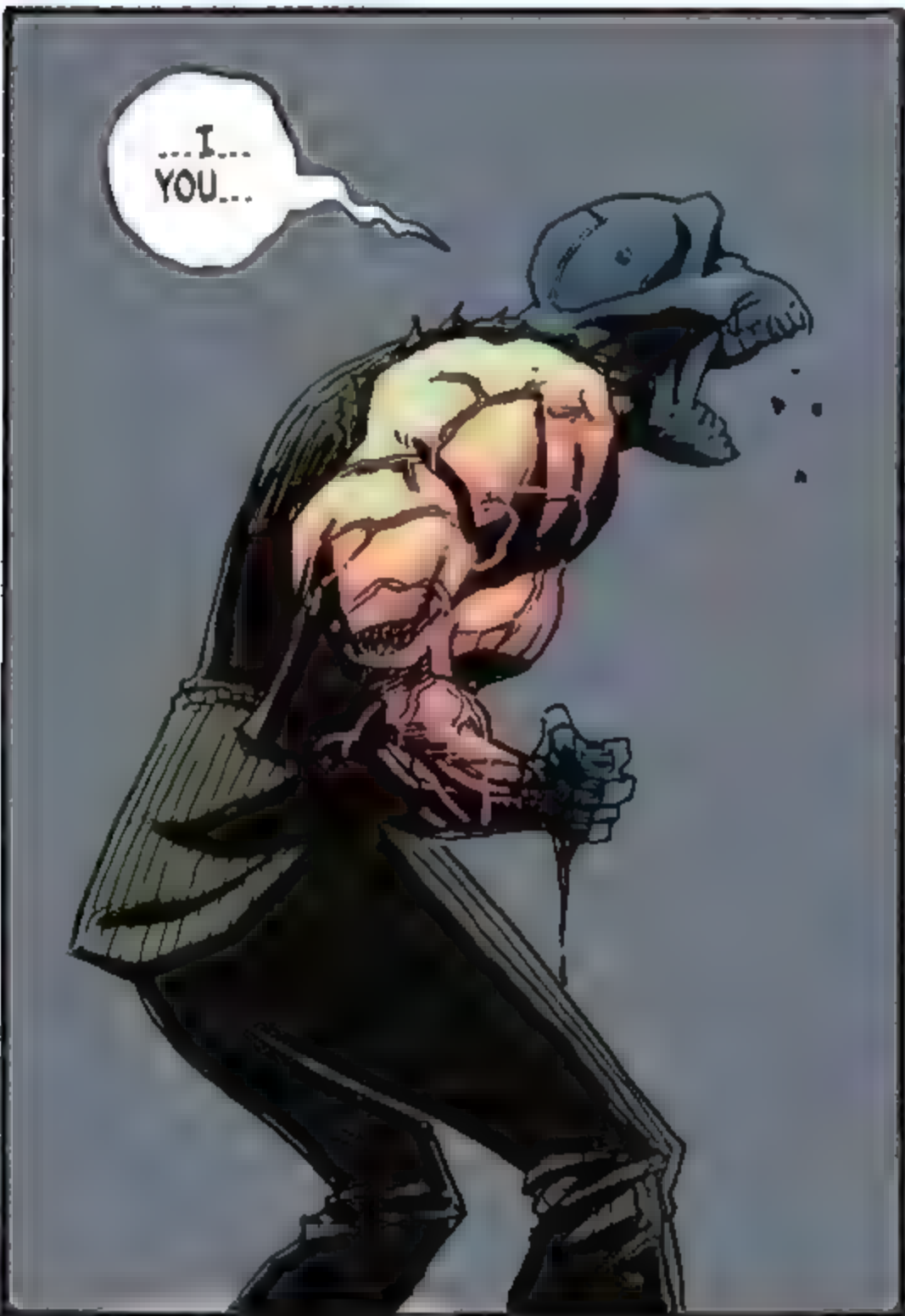
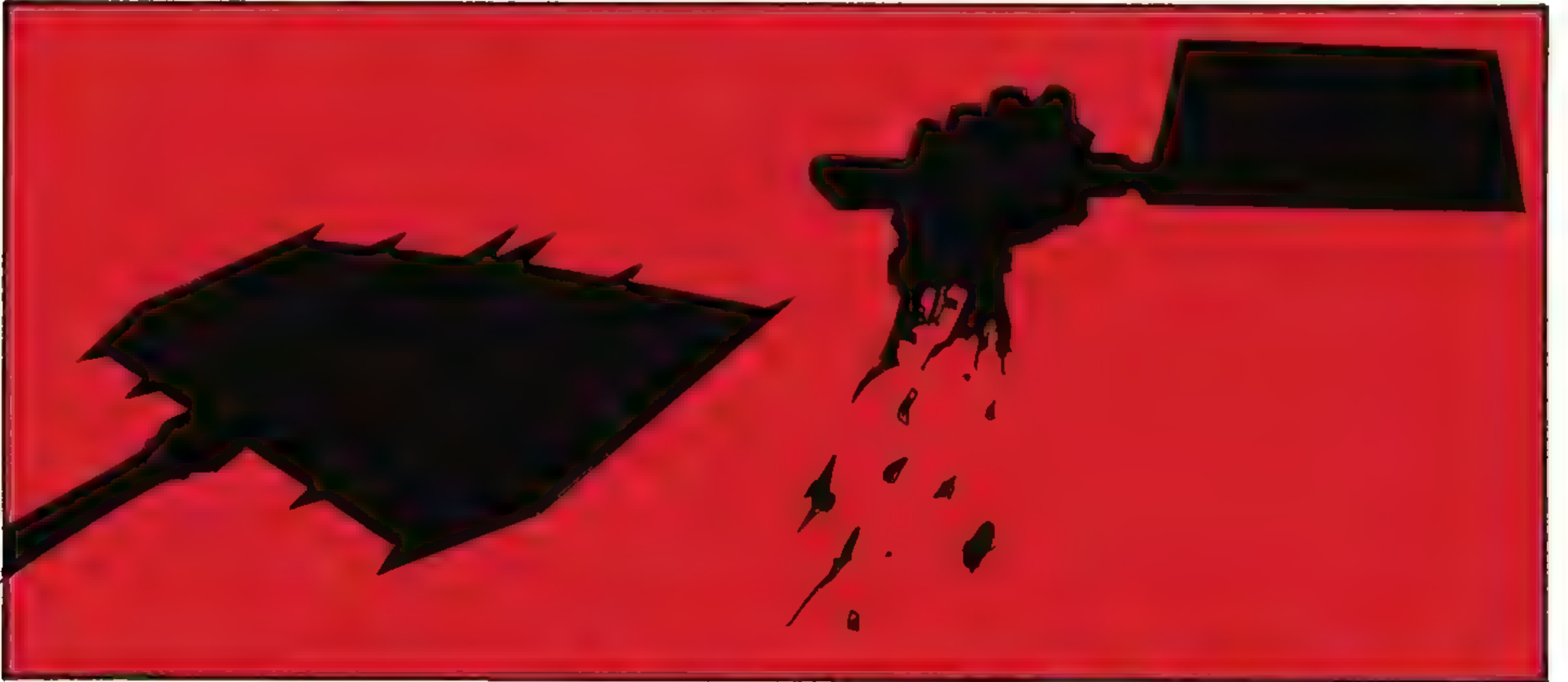


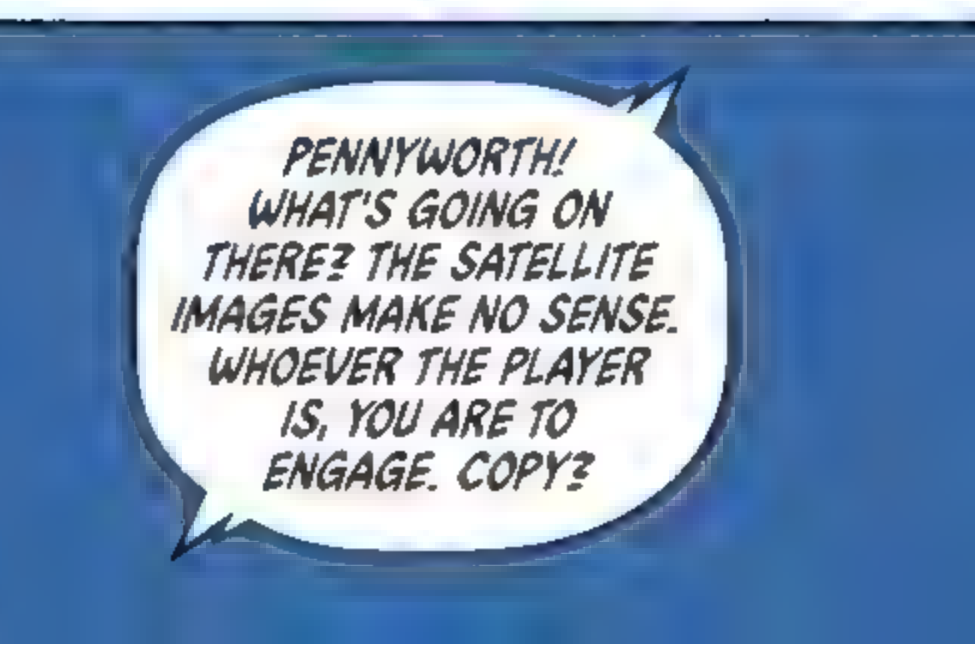
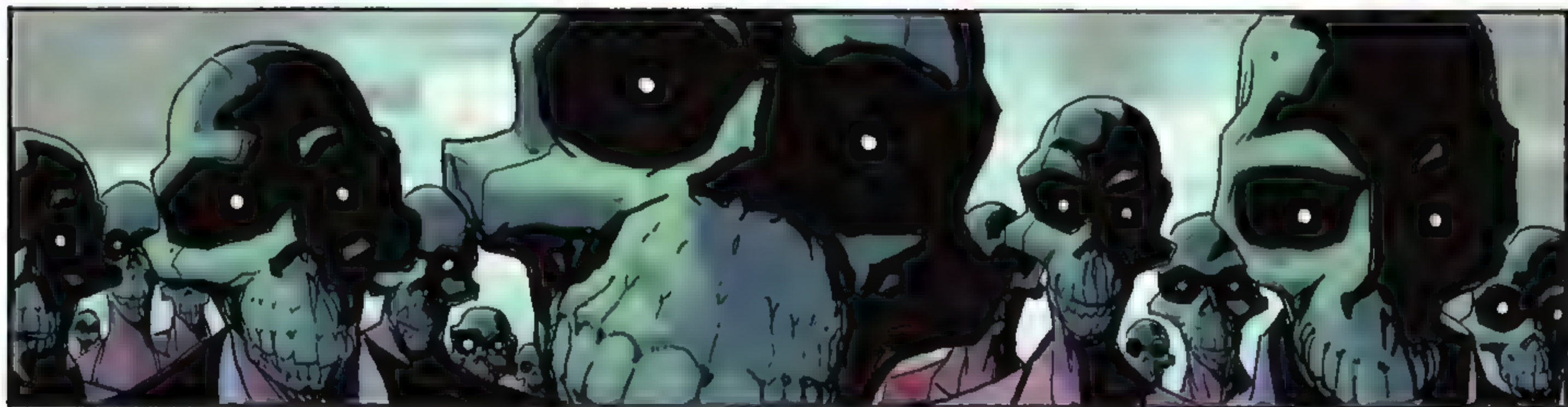


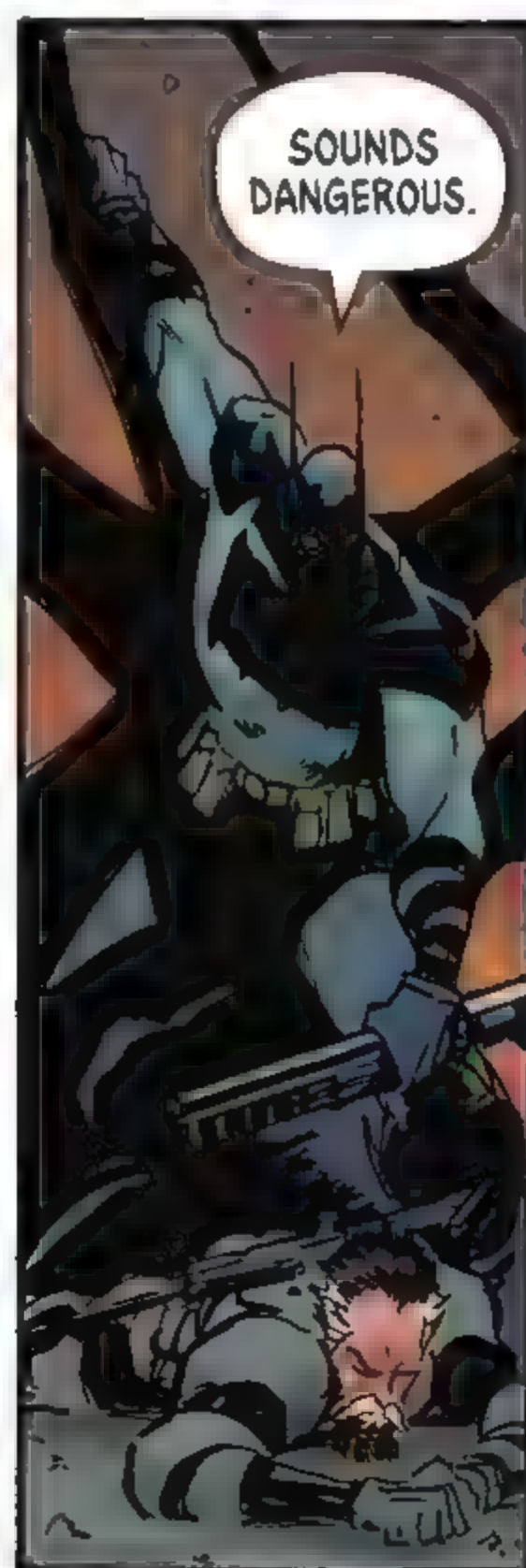
THIS *HAND* HAS KILLED
MORE PEOPLE THAN YOU
CAN COUNT. NOW I'M
GOING TO GIVE YOU
ONE CHANCE.

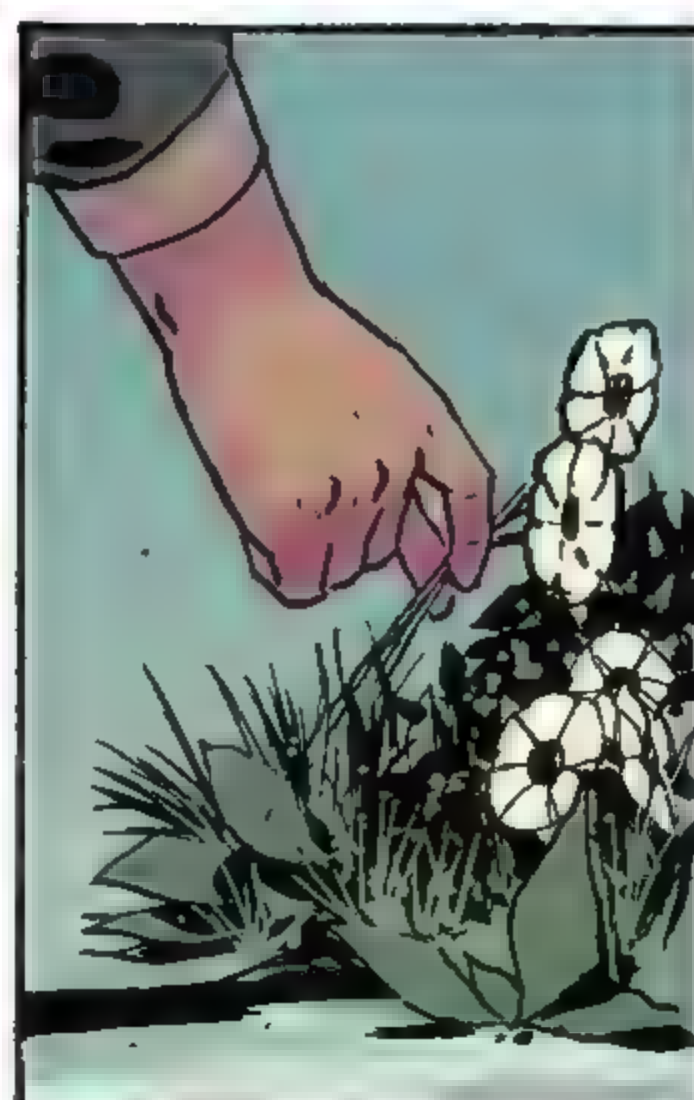
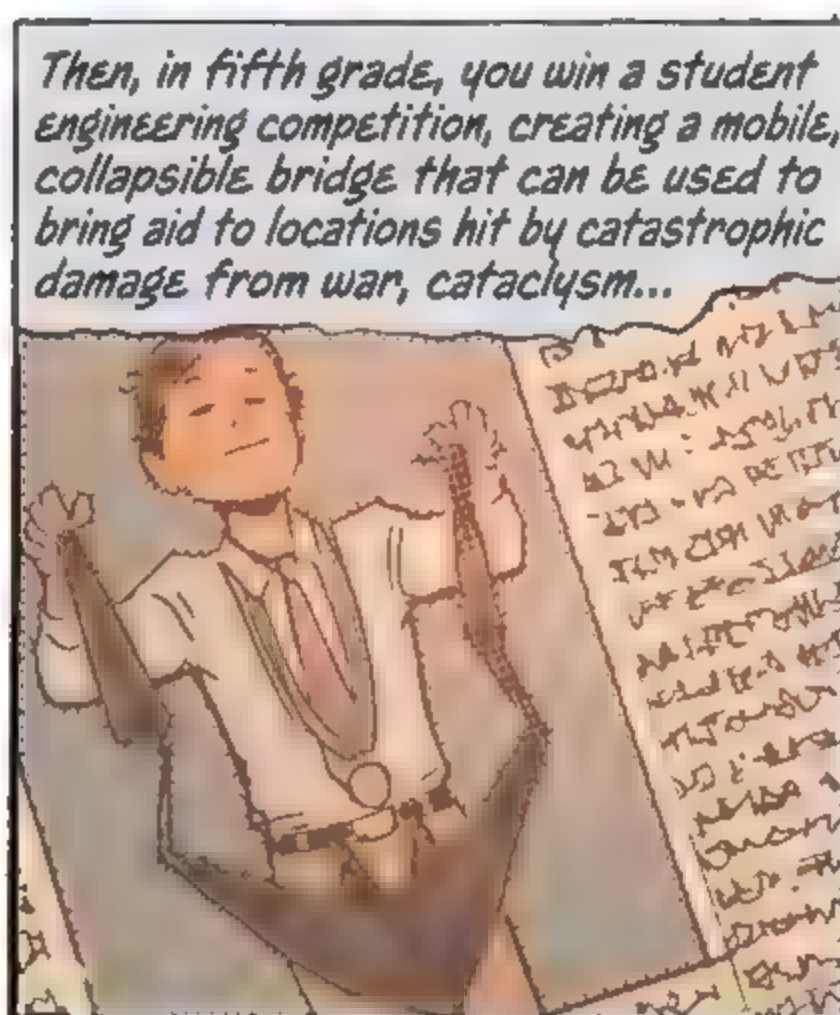
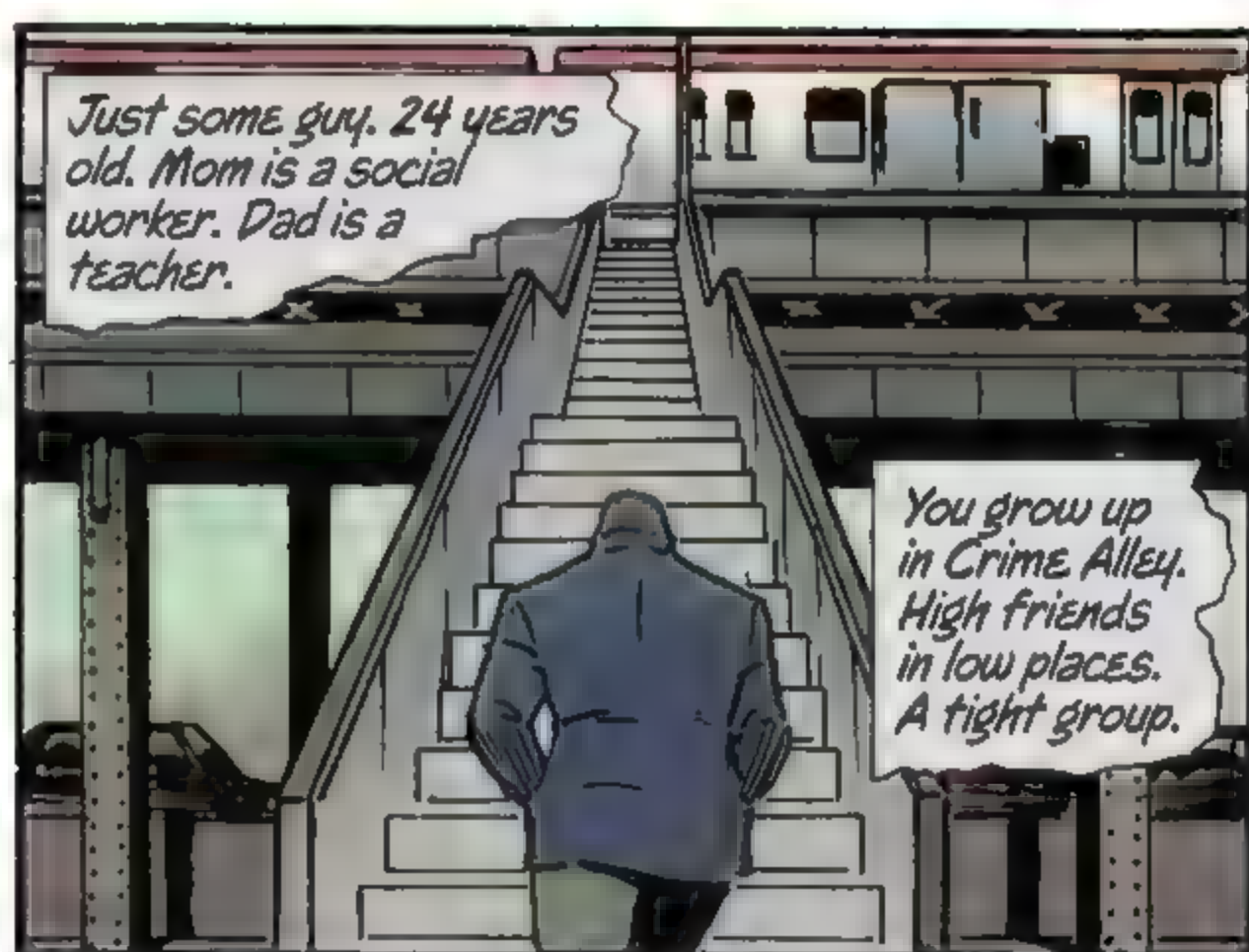
...GET
THE #\$\$%&
OUT OF OUR
WAY.





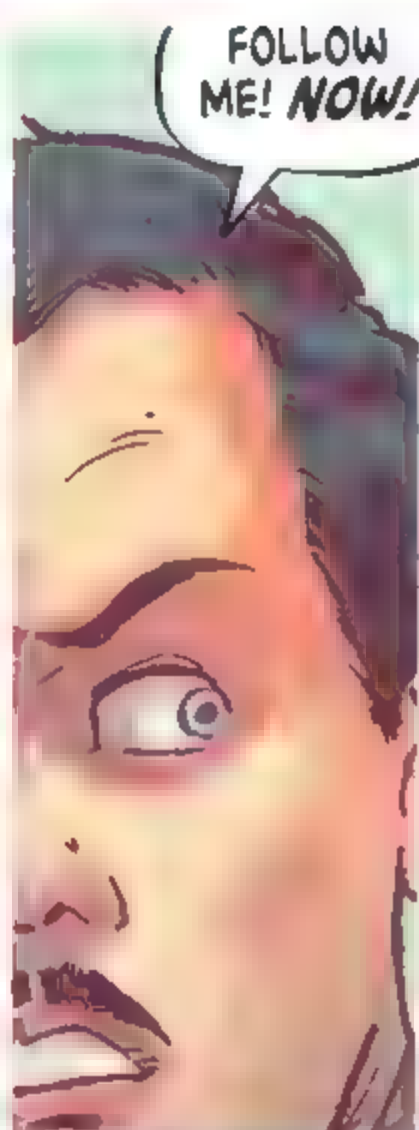




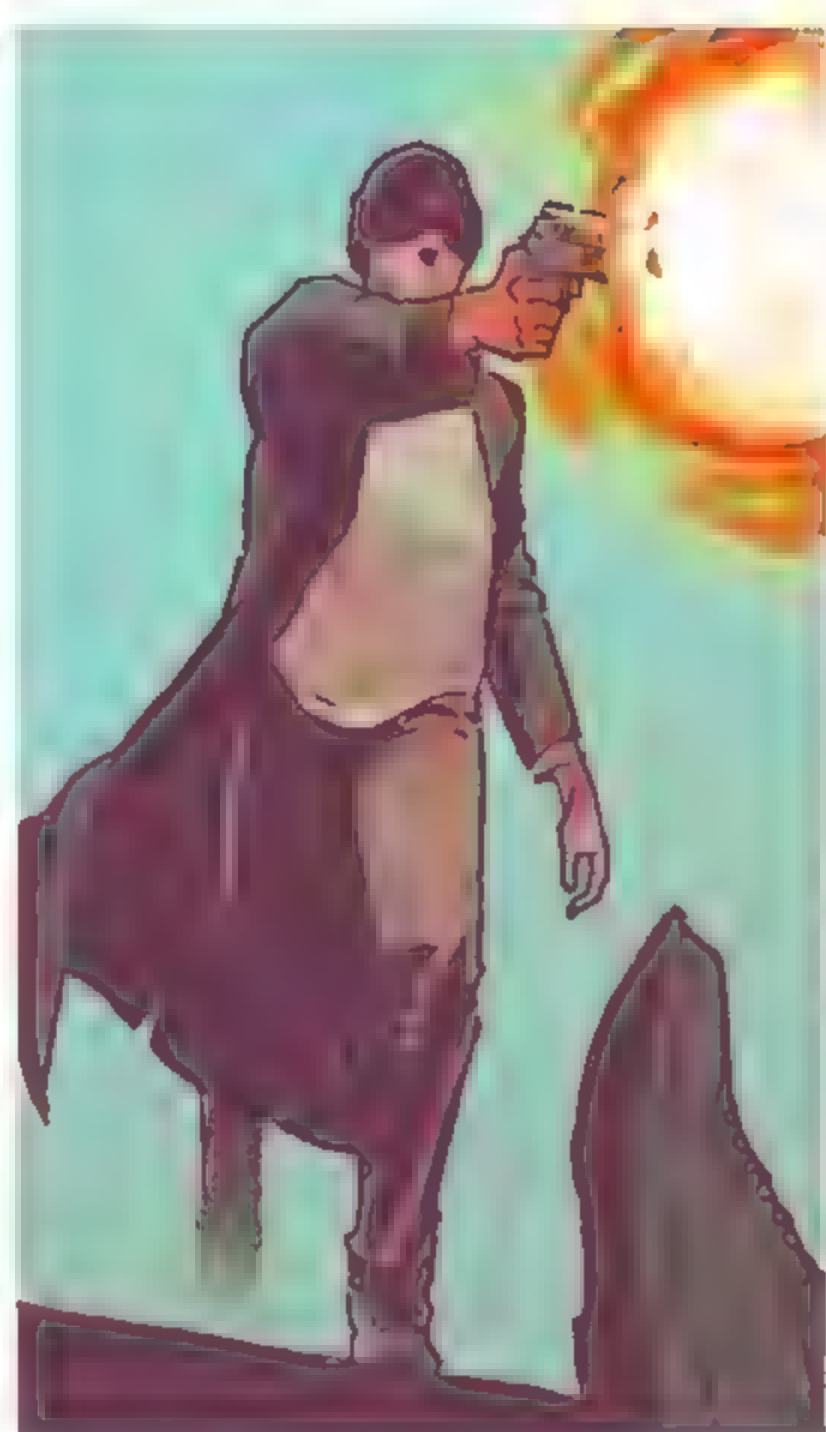
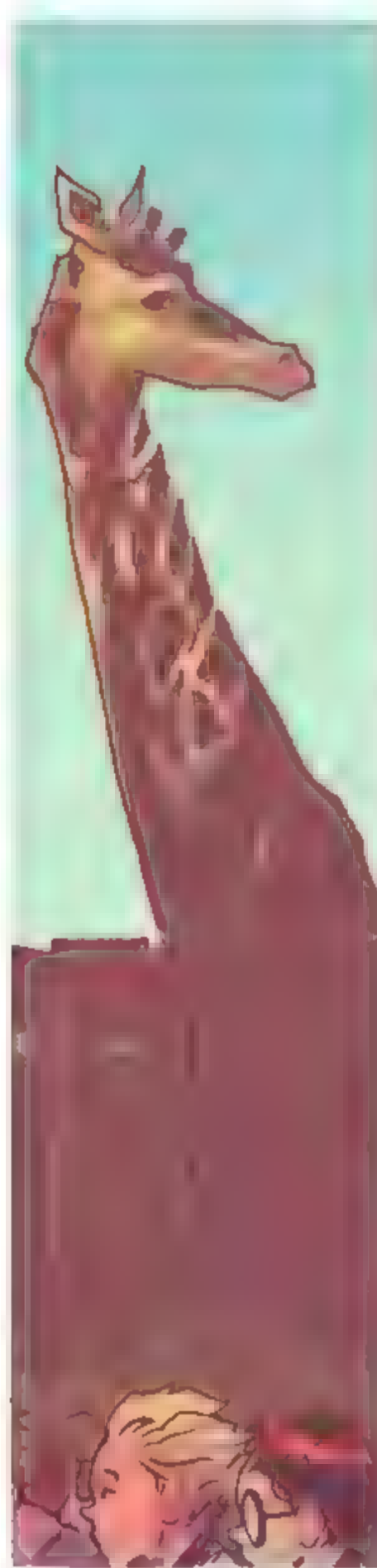




BLAM



BLAM

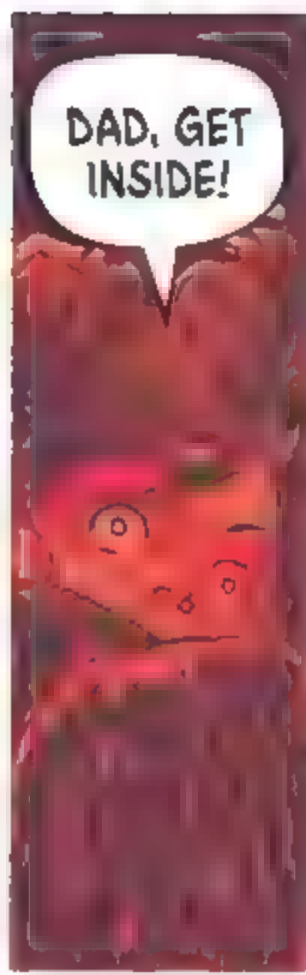


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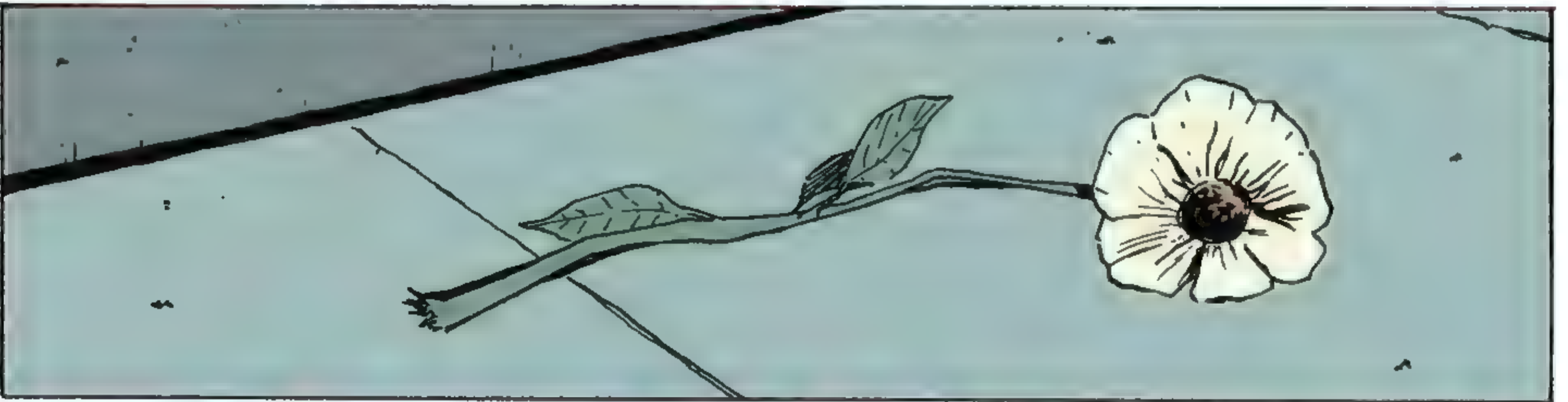
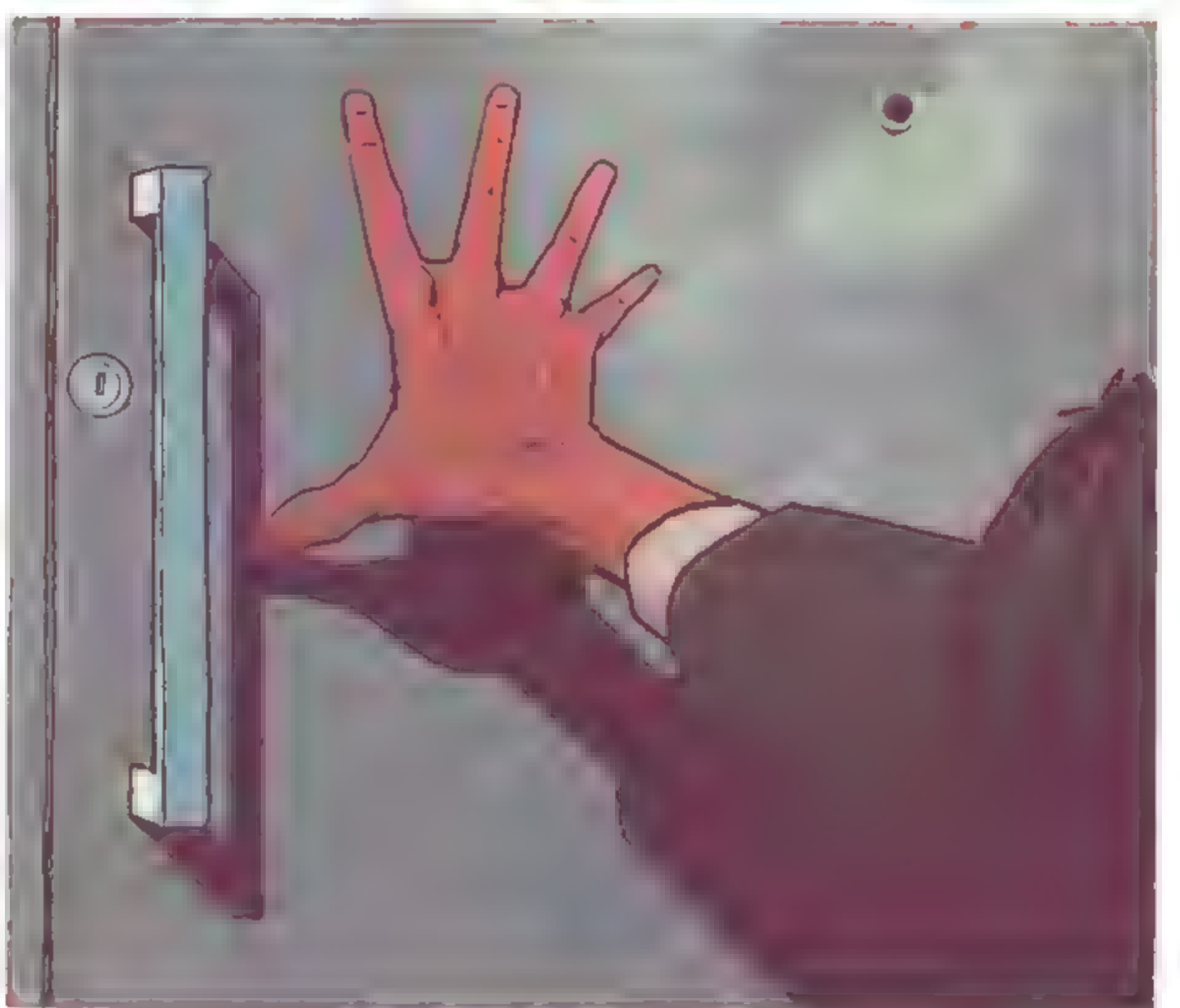
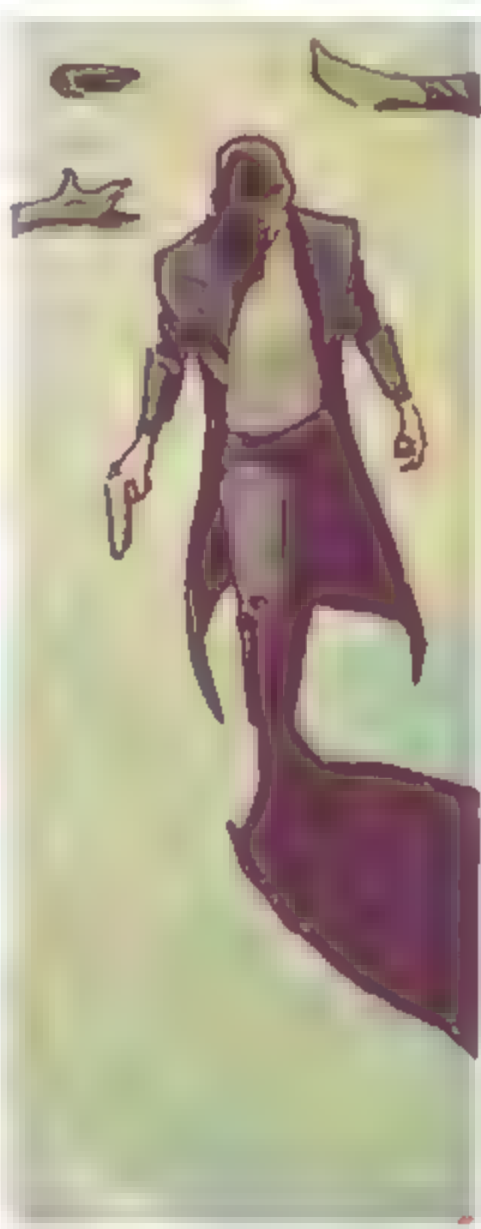


BLAM



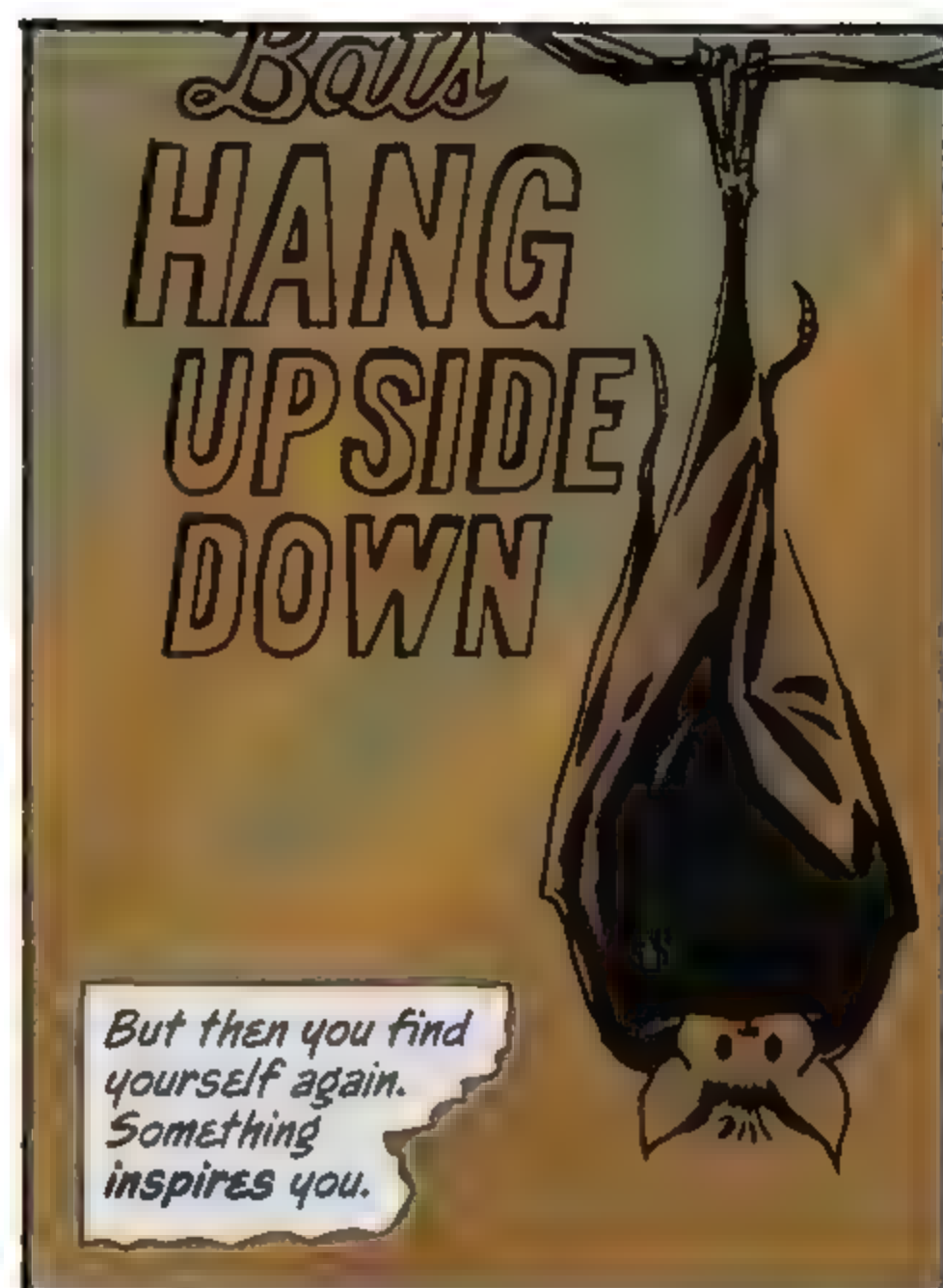
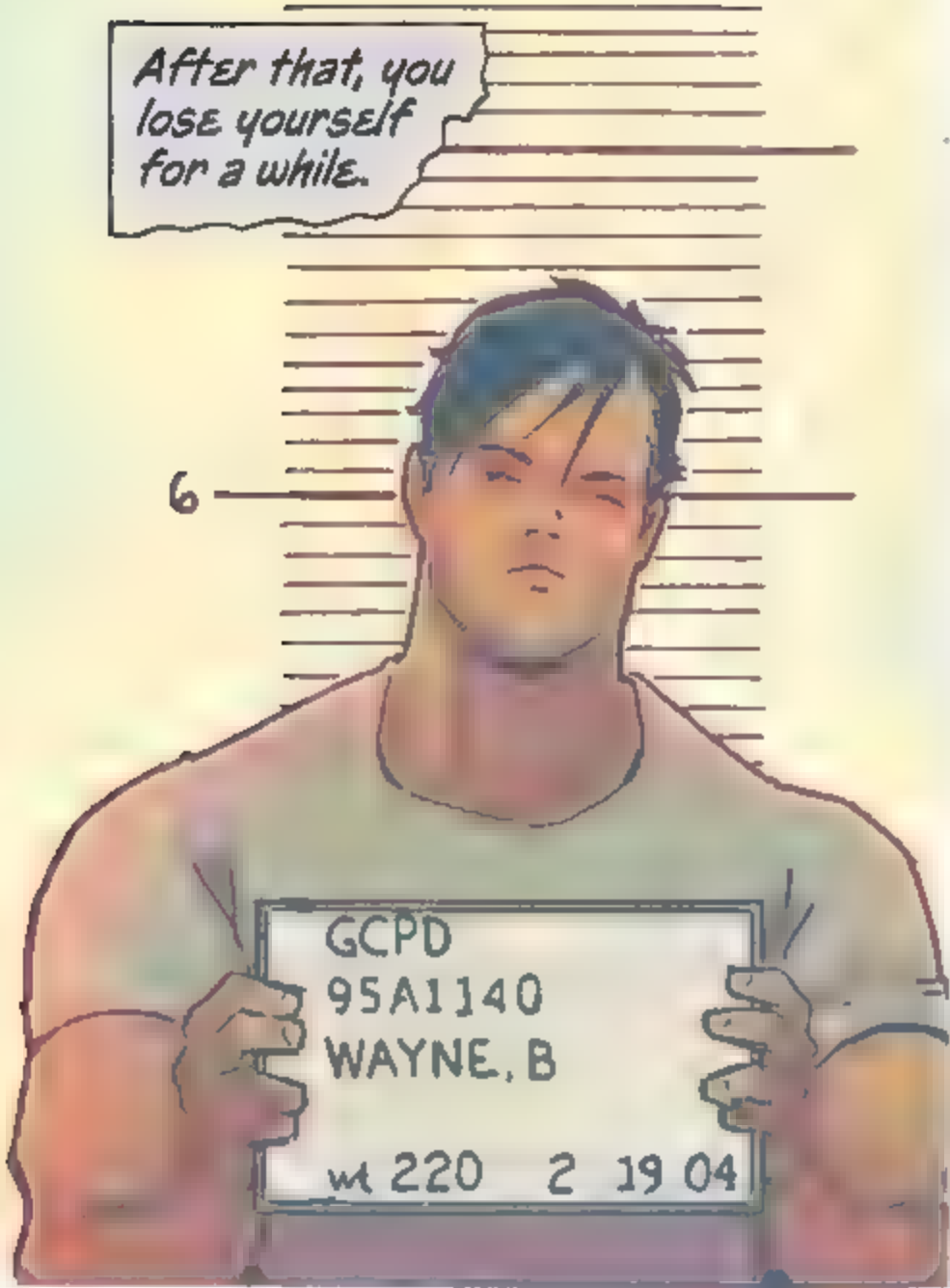


BLAM



BLAM







...and then you come home.

You set up in Gotham and work in the power grid.



Then the water department.

Next, sanitation.



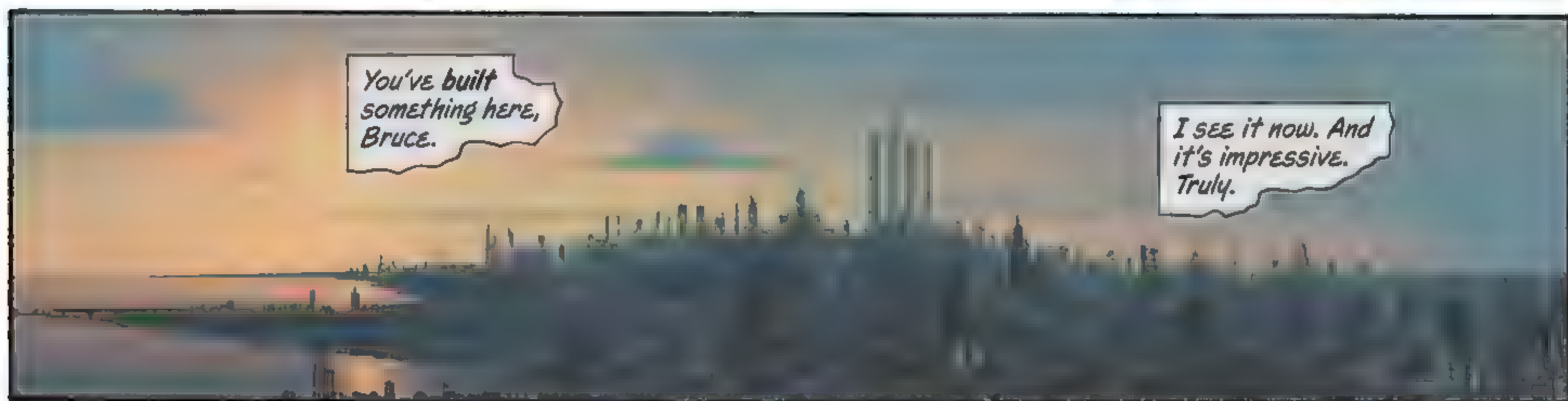
After that? You intern at City Hall, studying public policy, macro and micro.

Learning your city. The body, the brain, every damn part of Gotham.



Until finally, you come full circle. Ever the engineer.

Creating. Building. You even fix what you break... repairing the stairs you blew up last night.



You've built something here, Bruce.

I see it now. And it's impressive. Truly.



But I've taken down men like you before. In cities, in jungles, in deserts, all over the world.



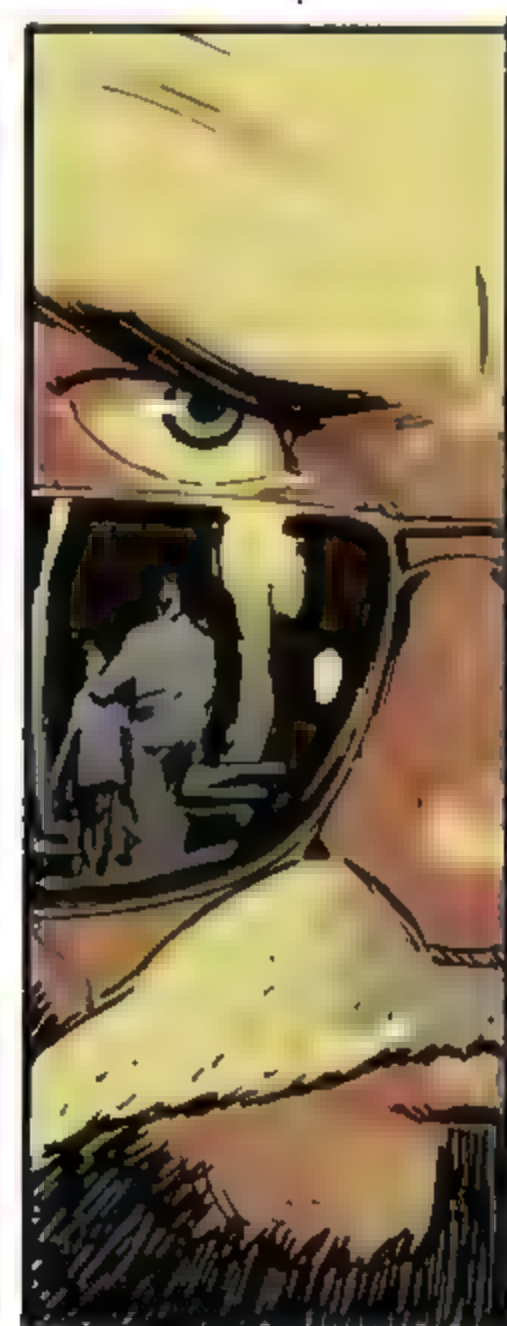
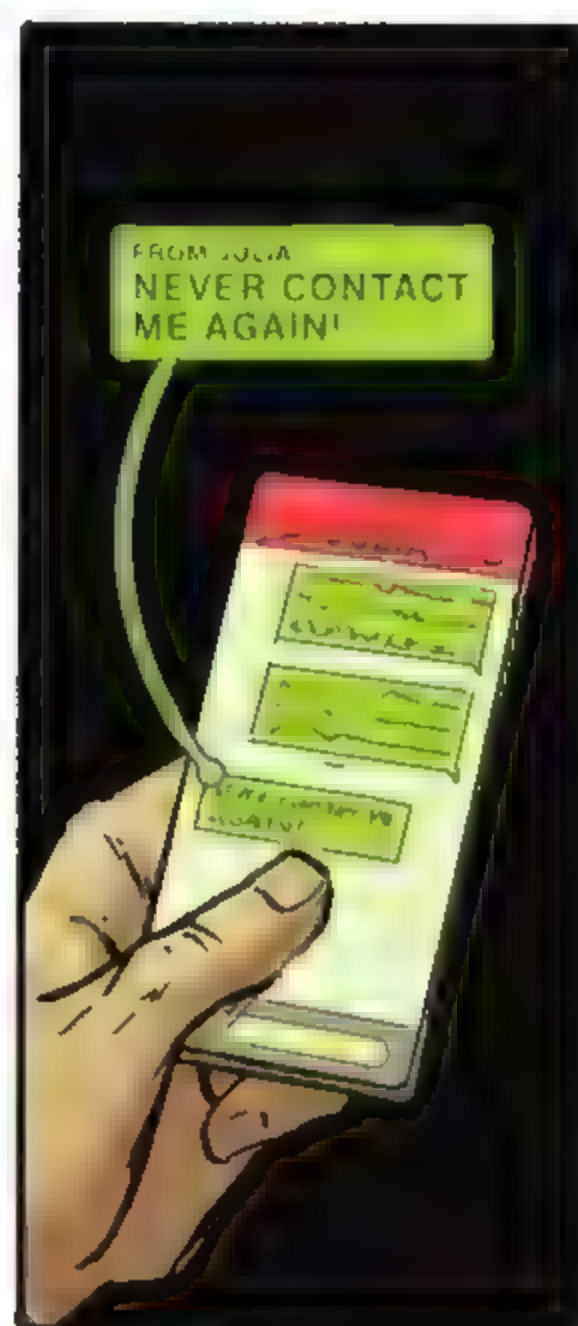
Because you're crusaders.

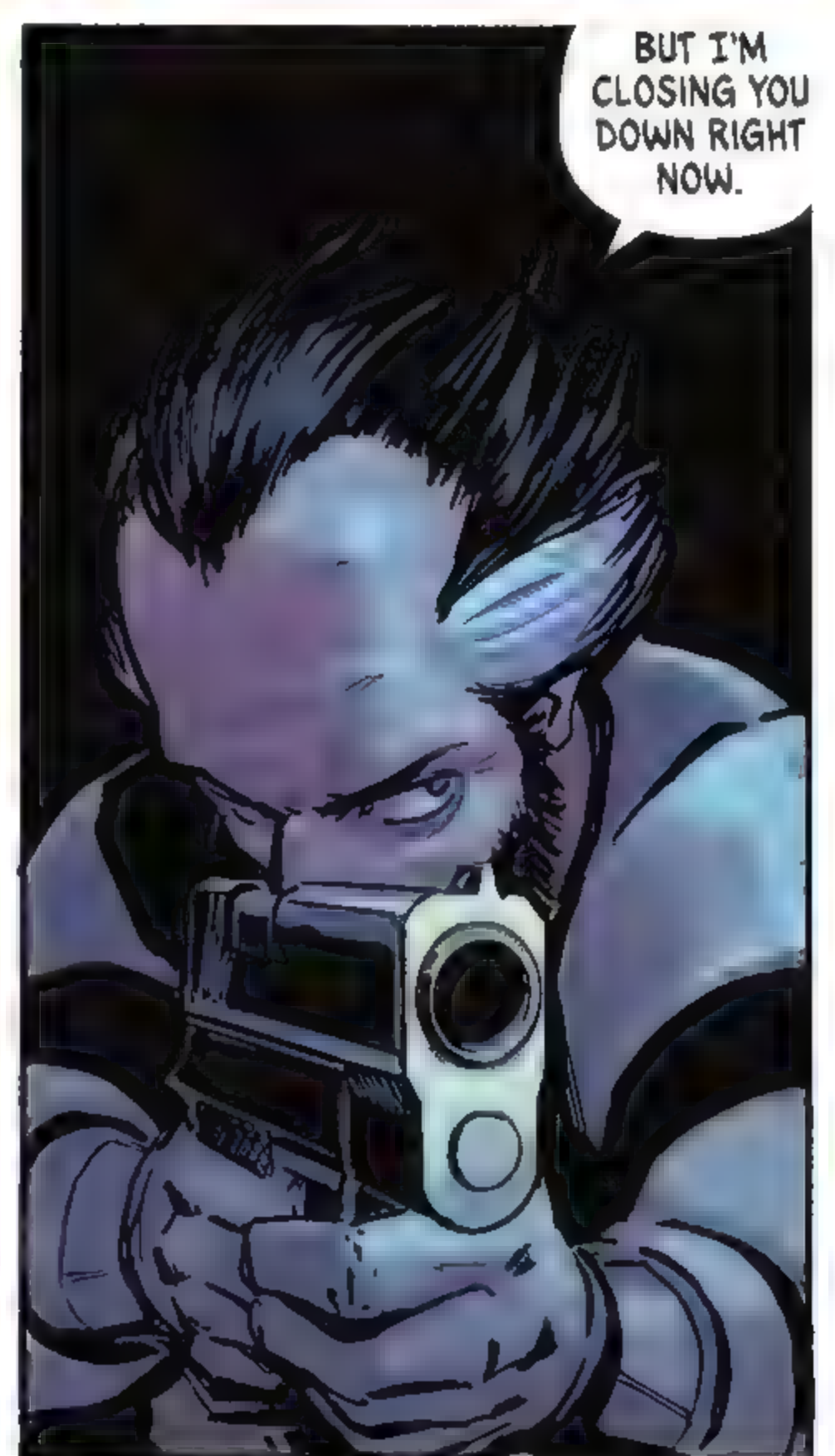
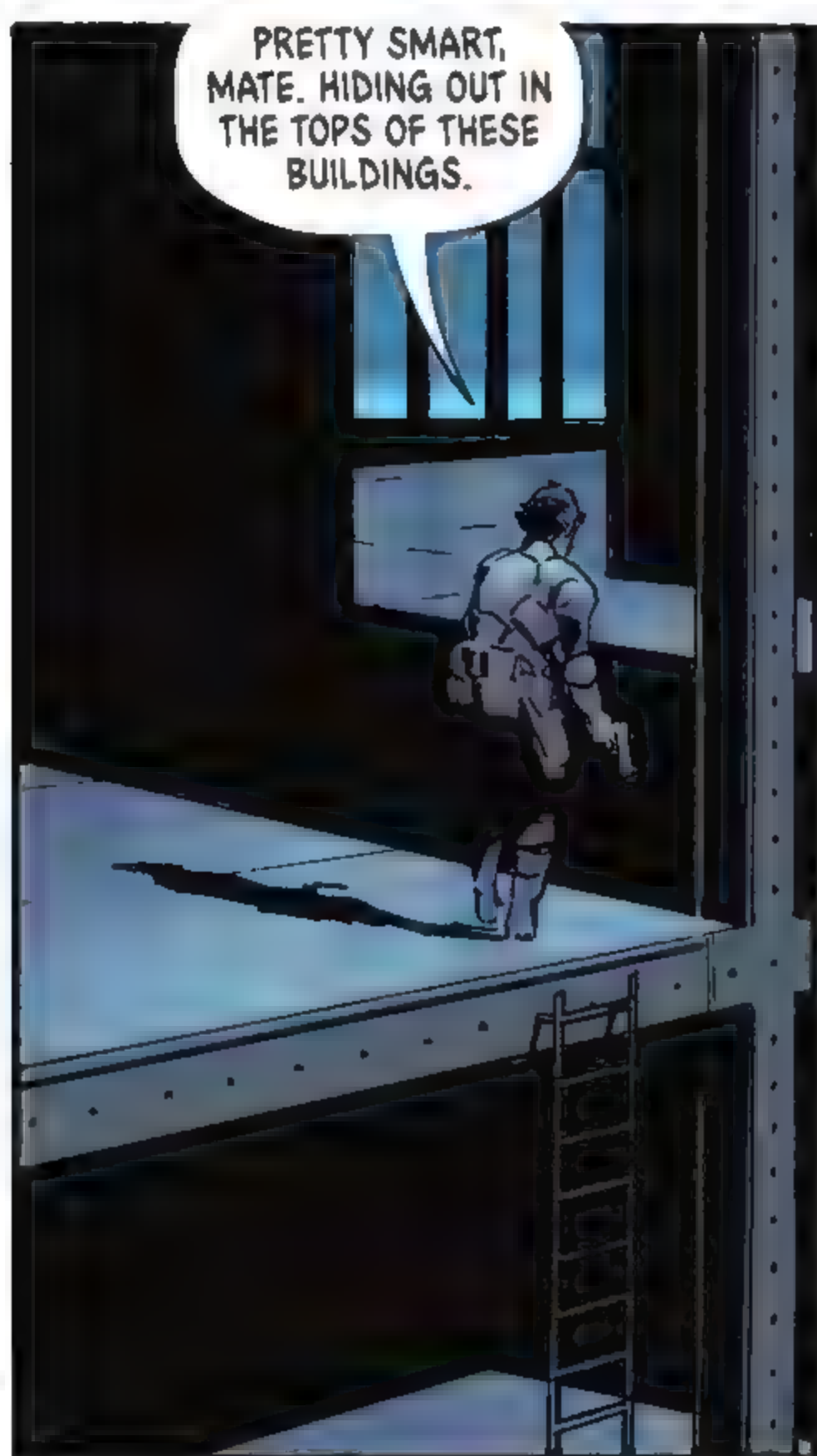
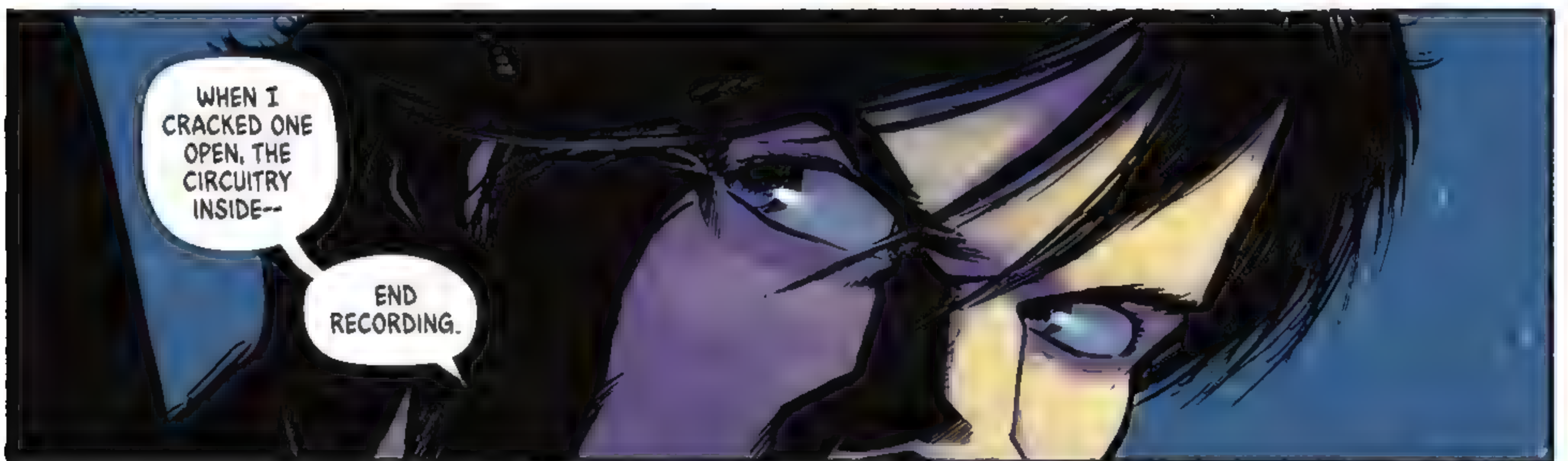


And crusaders always have a weakness.



And yours...









And then a few things happen very fast.

First, I realize the little #\$\$% modified my prize shotgun to be nonlethal. Ruined it.

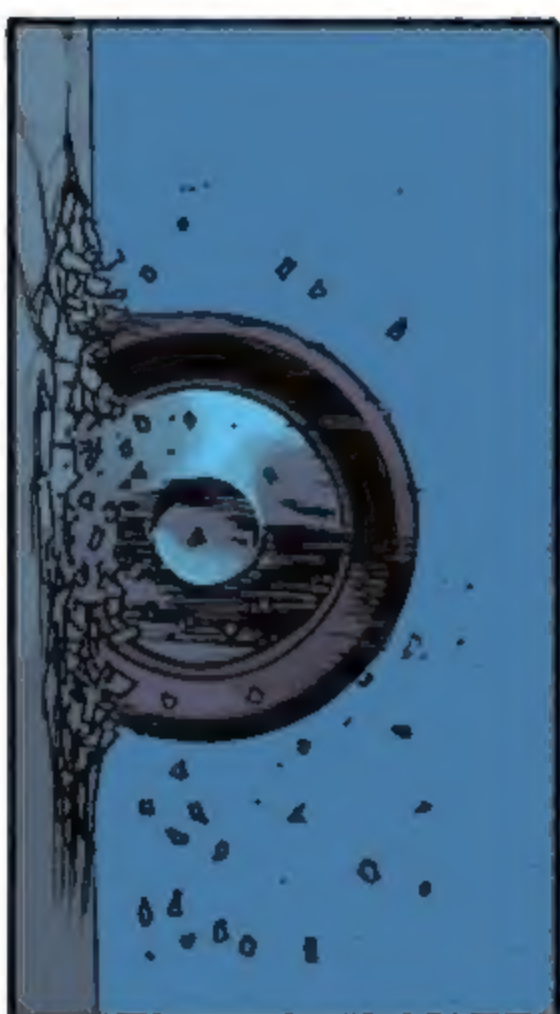
Second, I hear that very gun clatter by my side as though he's saying, "Keep it."

Third, I hear this...roar...

...the roar of my own damn bike.



Fourth, his voice, as he tells me, "You're not the only one who follows people."



And lastly, I hear the sound of glass shattering as he rides out the window...




...a thousand feet up.



»KOFF«
WHERE THE HELL IS HE GOING TO LAND?





And I think
to myself...

...maybe you're
not so bad these
days, Gotham.

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BATMAN CREATED BY BOB KANE WITH BILL FINGER

EPILOGUE.

I'LL GET HIM NEXT TIME HE INTERFERES.

UNDERSTOOD. JUST STAY FOCUSED ON THE PARTY ANIMALS.

AND...FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH...

...YOUR OLD TARGET? WE LOST HIM SOMEWHERE IN THE PHILIPPINES. HE'S IN THE WIND. THOUGHT YOU SHOULD KNOW.

Lost him.

Five years I tracked him. While he studied with Henri Ducard in France, then killed the poor @#%\$.

While he trained with the League of Assassins, then killed them.

Now...in the wind.

MANILA.

SEMICONDUCTOR MANUFACTURING PLANT.

SO JUST "SIR," NOTHING ELSE? NO MR. THIS OR THAT?

NOPE. THEY'RE ALL FAKE ANYWAY...

...JACK, ARTHUR. HELL, EVEN I DON'T KNOW HIS REAL NAME.

WHEN YOU'RE ONE OF THE THIRTY RICHEST MEN ON THE PLANET, YOU CAN BE WHOEVER YOU WANT, I GUESS.

THINK HE'D WANT TO BE MY RICH, GENEROUS BEST FRIEND?

"DON'T DO THAT. DON'T JOKE."

"WHY?"

"YOU DIDN'T HEAR? THE GUY NEVER LAUGHS. NOT AT ANYTHING. EVER."

"THAT'S WHY THEY CALL HIM..."

"...THE JOKER."

TO BE
CONTINUED...